

Europe on
Palestinian
unrest

PAGE 11

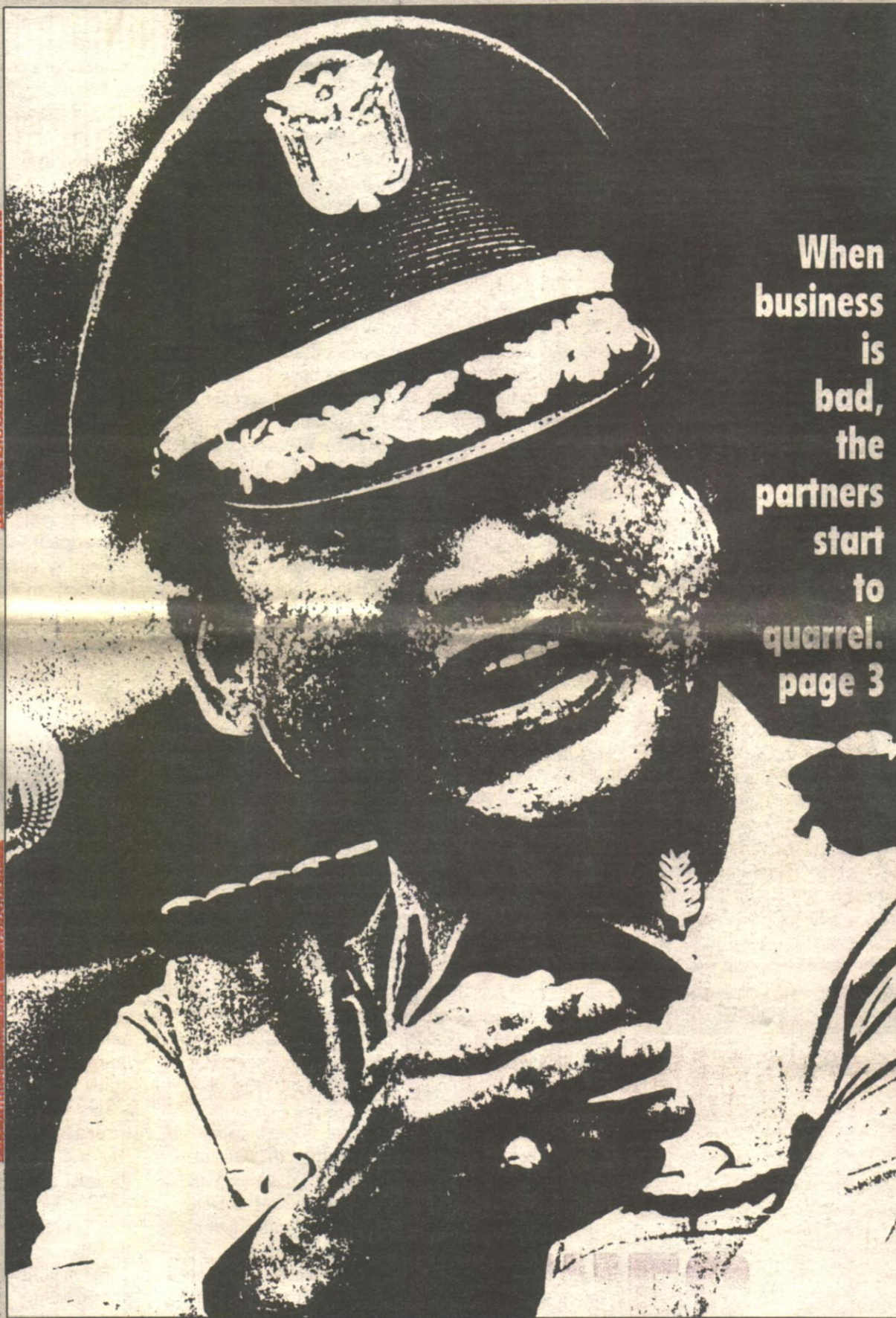
IN THESE TIMES

VOL. 12, NO. 13

FEB. 17-FEB. 23, 1988

\$1.25

NORIEGA & the PENTAGON



When
business
is
bad,
the
partners
start
to
quarrel.
page 3

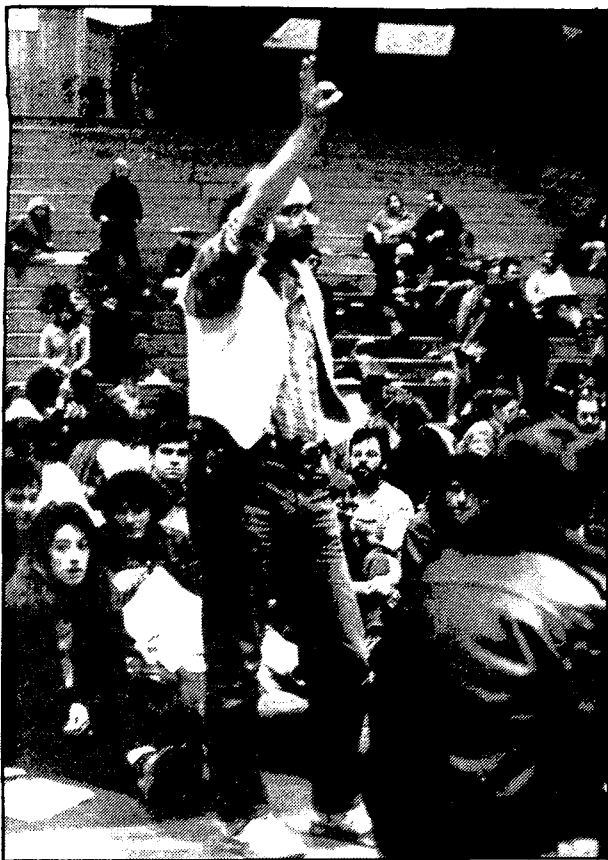
UPI Bettmann Newsphotos

No scruples
Of Meese and money

PAGE 6

And now...toy-gate
An *In These Times* exclusive

PAGE 12



The National Student Convention was held in early February at Rutgers University.

Students get off on wrong foot

By Nat Moss

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.

"It's deja vu all over again," noted a veteran observer of student movement politics during the National Student Convention at Rutgers University the weekend of February 6. The participants, almost 700 from some 130 schools and other affiliations around the country, were trying to do for the student movement of the '80s what the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) did in the '60s. They spent two days intensely discussing the ideals a student organization should represent and the actions it should take. In addition, they debated countless proposals for a constitutional structure.

But the size of the gathering, and the variety of political and social agendas of the delegates represented at the conference, virtually assured failure from the start. This became clear on the third day, when some delegates dramatically shifted the convention's focus.

As a result, no new national organization or specific goals and principles emerged. But the conference facilitated a network of politically active students and the delegates decided to reassemble again at Eastern Michigan University sometime in the next two years and try again.

Tracing roots: The idea for the convention was sparked in January 1987 at a Hampshire College conference called to discuss the organization of "a broad, continuous national response to the illegal and immoral activities through which the leaders of our society pervert America's interests."

Many students attending that meeting believed there was little need to create a new national organization when so many already exist: the United States Students Association (USSA), the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and the Progressive Student Network (PSN), among others. But the Rutgers contingent, with encouragement from Abbie Hoffman, left that meeting determined to host a convention for the creation of a nationally coordinated student left, a la Students for a Democratic Society.

Comparisons to SDS are only partially useful. The political climate that led SDS to draft the Port Huron Statement in 1962 in many ways resembles that of today: a deep concern for racial oppression, a myopic foreign policy that sees an East-West standoff at every turn and the collusion of the university in expanding and promoting the military-industrial complex.

The Rutgers convention grew out of a sense on campuses across the nation that universities and the current political structures have let students down. This was apparent in the recent wave of demonstrations over issues ranging from investment of university monies in South Africa, to biases by race and sexual orientation in admissions, curriculum and the hiring of college faculty and staff, to CIA campus recruitment.

Yet SDS grew up very differently. When it convened at Port Huron, Mich., in June 1962, it had been renamed from its original Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID) by its first president, Al Haber. SLID represented the student wing of the League for Industrial Democracy (LID), an organization loosely tied to the Socialist Party, a Cold War, anti-Communist group.

Fifty-nine students from a dozen campuses found their way to Michigan that summer, but they knew each other, and shared basic views. Their main accomplishment, the Port Huron Statement, has remained an enduring and historic document in its articulation of the collective will of young, radical students.

Too little time: The Rutgers convention differed in several ways. The agenda—as worked out by the Rutgers group, with input chiefly from MIT and Berkeley contingents—allowed but two days to reach a consensus among a diverse group of leftists on a constitution and set of organizing principles from independently submitted proposals.

If this plan sounds utopian, that's because it was. Under ideal circumstances, a weekend would not have been enough time to accomplish the business at hand. As it was, the meeting erupted in chaos from the start. The Rutgers organizers, unsure of what had hit them, never recovered.

The weekend's watchword became disorganization—a problem that stemmed in large part from the Rutgers group's inexperience. One reporter covering the event suggested that it was precisely these students' naivete that allowed the convention to be called in the first place. Anyone else would have been overwhelmed at the prospect of trying to unite the vastly different types of individuals who comprise the student left: those defining themselves as progressives, radicals, Marxist-Leninists, feminists, revolutionaries, democratic socialists, anarchists, Maoists, Trotskyites, along with other shades and combinations in between.

The conference's opening night got off to a bad start. Besides logistical problems, diversity of opinion began early to eat a hole in the group's respect for the agenda. The Rutgers organizers engendered further resentment when they tried to enforce a rule requiring participants to pay their registration fees before participating in the meeting. "We need to be different from the fucking society we're trying to break into," cried a student from Boston who then proceeded to burn his registration card.

The agenda dispute centered chiefly on representation at the convention, leading to the creation of three caucuses: a "people of color" caucus, a gay/lesbian/bisexual caucus, and an independent caucus. The last group consisted of individuals frustrated by the idea of approaching left politics through established political mechanisms—such as the existing party system—or through "Leninist" organizations, many of which were represented at the convention.

A large number of sectarian groups attended—the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, the Spartacist Youth League, the Proletarian Warriors. But only one organization, the Progressive Labor Party, acting through a front group, the International Committee Against Racism (INCAR), succeeded in disrupting the conference.

Saturday morning was no better. Few of the participants seemed to understand why they were attending issue workshops or what they were supposed to do. One workshop dealt with "visions" for a new student left. At least half the discussion revolved around what should be talked about, a problem that underscored the need for a shared perspective.

Organizational proposals were easier to discuss. Afternoon "principles of organization" workshops, held around the gym, ran more smoothly than the morning ones, and proposals emerged from each one by day's end.

In the evening rock star Steve van Zandt (who is also director of Peace-Net, a computer network set up for information sharing) and Abbie Hoffman spoke. Van Zandt showed his anti-apartheid video, "Sun City." Hoffman stirred the delegates. "You are making history," he told them, calling them "bold and courageous." Having given much of the initial encouragement to the organizers himself, this appeared to be self-promotion. But he encouraged the students to work for positive change, and with a message seemingly directed at the anarchists present, Hoffman said, "It's not up to you to go out and destroy America. It's up to you to go out and save America."

Sunday surprise: Students went into Sunday expecting to hash out a constitution, a set of guiding principles and an immediate plan of action for their campuses. But they

INSIDE STORY

got something very different. The minority caucus along with the gay/lesbian/bisexual caucus issued a statement early in the morning saying that the convention would be a sham if a constitution were passed within a body not truly representative of the student left. Until they agreed actively to work with minorities and those of non-heterosexual orientations, the caucuses insisted, the organization should not be created. A proposal was made to hold off ratifying a constitution, and the two caucuses threatened to walk out and call for a national day of education if it was not passed.

This stunned the group. The Rutgers delegation retreated into a caucus of their own, emerging 30 minutes later with a second proposal designed to ensure that at the least a second convention would be planned.

The delegation also called for the organization of two days of national protest, one against racial injustice and the other against CIA-sponsored crimes.

The minority caucus emerged with a second proposal of its own: the group should spend the rest of the afternoon breaking down into regional workshops and seek to form a national outreach committee. All three proposals passed on a voice vote.

Although the convention's goal of forming a nationwide student left organization was not met many students left the event satisfied to have met with a number of people and established an initial regional structure. Earl Flanagan, a member of the people of color caucus and a freshman from Eastern Michigan University, where the next convention is scheduled to be held, said, "You need more than 15 hours to ratify a constitution. You need a whole week. Maybe we'll do it in the summer."

Nat Moss is a freelance journalist in New York City.

CONTENTS

Inside Story: The National Student Convention	2
Noriega plays his trump card	3
In Short	4
Of Meese and money	6
What the Democrats learned in Iowa	7
Democracy at the diner	7
Race-baiting in the FBI	8
The politics of processed cheese	9
Nicaragua in the wake of Congress' vote	10
Europe's reaction to Occupied Territories violence	11
How a toymaker became an arms trader without really trying ...	12
Editorials	14
Letters Sylvia	15
Viewpoint: In praise of Jesse Jackson	16
Ashes & Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn	17
In Print: <i>The Truly Disadvantaged</i>	18
<i>The Last Intellectuals</i>	19
In the Arts: <i>Star Trek's</i> regeneration	20
Media Beat	21
Classifieds Life in Hell	23
The office politics of the Final Solution	24

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1988 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Jesus Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 12, No. 13) published Feb. 17, 1988, for newsstand sales Feb. 17-23, 1988.

By Merrill Collett

INDICTED ON DRUG CHARGES IN THE U.S. AND FACING rising resistance at home, Panama's beleaguered military strongman has been forced to play his best card in his power game with Uncle Sam. Gen. Manuel Noriega says the Pentagon will have to pull its military bases out of the Panama Canal Area.

For some time Noriega, who runs Panama through a puppet president, has blamed the street protests of the last six months on right-wingers in the U.S. He says they want to oust him from power so Washington can take over the canal.

That may be true, but Washington knows that American interests in the Isthmus no longer center on the canal but on the 14 U.S. military bases built along its banks. Modern means of moving freight and military might have made the canal less essential, but the U.S. military presence in Panama has assumed new importance in the eyes of policy-makers.

There is every reason to believe the U.S. will keep its agreement to turn over the canal to Panama in 12 years, but the future of the military bases remains unclear. Until recently, Noriega leaned toward leasing the bases to the Pentagon, which would give him and his cronies a chance to take a cut. But on February 8 he said the Pentagon would have to pull out.

During most of their 85 years in Panama, the U.S. Armed Forces played the role of occupation army guarding the canal against the Panamanians. That rationale withered away when the Senate hearings on the 1977 Carter-Torrijos treaty established that the canal could not be defended from sabotage. But by then the Pentagon had found a new reason for keeping its Southern Command—"Southcom"—in Panama.

Enter Castro: Southcom was once a sleepy military complex in a low-risk region. But Cuba's Fidel Castro changed that. After the Cuban revolution, Washington moved Southcom, which directs all U.S. ground troops below Mexico, to the front lines in the fight against the Rising Red Tide. When *los muchachos* took Managua in 1979, Southcom was at the cutting edge of the East-West conflict.

This meant maintaining a state of armed readiness. Southcom has 9,200 U.S. military personnel supported by 8,100 civilian employees and backed up by thousands of tons of armament. But the complex has also played an important ideological role.

Southcom's School of the Americas at Fort Gulick educated some 45,000 Latin American officers in Washington's way of thinking. Among them were Chile's Augusto Pinochet, Paraguay's Alfredo Stroessner, Nicaragua's Anastasio Somoza, Bolivia's Hugo Banzer and Argentina's Leopoldo Galtieri—men who turned their armies on their own people. As democracy replaced military dictatorship in the region, the school was seen as a public-relations liability, and it was relocated to the U.S.

Southcom has taken other steps to spruce up its image. Southcom strategists helped develop a doctrine of counterrevolutionary warfare that—in theory—puts the U.S. Armed Forces on the side of social change in Latin America.

While chief of Southcom's Policy and Strategy Division, Lt. Col. David Caldon came

Future of key U.S. bases uncertain as beseiged Noriega says "get out"



Gen. Manuel Noriega has increasingly relied on repression to suppress popular discontent.

up with a notion he called "security development," one of the precursors to the doctrine of low-intensity conflict.

He argued that the Army must integrate the political and military aspects of making war in the Third World. Killing guerrillas is necessary but not sufficient, Caldon said. The U.S. must also help to build more durable societies that can be defended against insurgents. In effect, he wanted to turn Mao on his head and make Southcom's 193rd Brigade part of a "people's army" that would not only out-fight the enemy but out-administer him as well. In theory, Southcom's soldiers should become "nation-builders."

Literal translation: This idea was applied quite literally in Panama. Thousands of U.S. Army National Guardsmen—often working together with Panamanian soldiers—have helped build roads in remote regions of Panama during annual training exercises. The engineering achievements were matched by equally important public-relations triumphs for both Noriega and the Pentagon.

The roads contributed to the development of Panama's long-neglected interior and enhanced the image of Noriega's Panama Defense Forces. And the project allowed Southcom Public Affairs publications to show American troops as civic-minded citizens of a benevolent northern power. Meanwhile, Noriega keeps his fist on the reins of power. Panama's military rulers have removed from office five presidents in five years.

Thus the Pentagon has reduced the theory of playing a progressive role in Latin America to the practice of carrying out showcase projects in Panama. In fact, Southcom has lined up firmly behind the Panama Defense Forces, training their officers, supplying them with hardware and engaging in joint military maneuvers just when civilians began clamoring for more power. This is sadly reminiscent of the Alliance for Progress in the '60s.

Under the alliance, U.S. military aid to Central America required the region's armies to carry out civic action programs. But the rhetoric of reform only served to clothe rep-

ression of democratic rights. Washington's literacy, health and public welfare programs polished the image of Latin American military dictators but left their power intact.

In Panama, Noriega has kept the Pentagon tagging behind him by dangling out the hope that he will allow Washington to lease the Southcom military bases after the end of 1999, when the canal reverts to Panama.

The canal treaties would allow such a lease arrangement, but a truly civilian government in Panama City probably would not. The business elite who make up the anti-Noriega opposition are not particularly progressive but neither are they pleased with the political role Pentagon has played in their country. There is every likelihood they would kick Southcom out if they had the chance.

Thus the U.S. brass have been unconcerned about the frequent rotation of Panama's presidents as long as the Pentagon thought it could keep a foothold in the Isthmus by sticking with Noriega. But the continued opposition to his rule has pushed the Pentagon to change its mind.

The policy shift was made official when Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Armitage held secret talks with Noriega in late December. The talks were announced by Secretary of State George Shultz, signalling a new unity between the U.S. military and the State Department. The State Department has long wanted the Pentagon to adopt a harder line toward Noriega. Thus it must have been with some satisfaction that Shultz announced Armitage had told Noriega he had to pull back from politics.

A Gallup Poll has shown that 75 percent of the Panamanian people favor the same thing, but popular opinion has been ambivalent about what should follow Noriega's rule. There is a deep suspicion among poor Panamanians about the business elite who lead the anti-Noriega protests from the headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce.

The elite have been looking for a way back to power ever since the late Gen. Omar Torrijos pushed them out in a left-leaning coup in 1968. After Torrijos died in a plane crash in 1981, Noriega took over. His corrupt and cynical regime has generated widespread discontent and given the elite a mass base for their efforts to regain control.

Noriega has increasingly relied on repression to suppress discontent. Troops from the elite 2000 Battalion, a U.S.-equipped unit created to defend the canal when Panama takes over, are now deployed against protestors. The ensuing violence is stimulating capital flight and undermining the economy.

The largely middle-class protestors of the National Civic Crusade have stuck to non-violence, but discontent with Noriega has seeped into all classes. The economic crisis is getting worse, and working Panamanians who suffer most may not be willing to play by middle-class rules. As the stampede gathers force, the Pentagon desperately seeks the right horse to ride.

Merrill Collett is a journalist based in Caracas, Venezuela.

Noriega, who runs Panama through a puppet president, has blamed recent street protests on right-wingers in the U.S. He says they want to oust him from power so Washington can take over the canal.

INSHORT

By Jim Naureckas

Something to cry about

Seven people, including five infants under two months of age, have been killed by "non-lethal" Israeli tear gas, according to Washington's Arab American Institute. The group, a political organization for Americans of Arab descent, also points out that the figure generally given for Palestinians killed in the crackdown—now 50—counts only people who are killed immediately, ignoring those who die later of their wounds. The actual toll, according to the institute, is at least 79.

The right to remain solvent

Nicaraguan army defector Maj. Roger Miranda has been the star witness for the Reagan administration in its claims of Nicaraguan military aggression. Now it turns out that Miranda is drawing a star's salary. The *Washington Post* revealed on February 4 that Miranda was to receive a defection-appreciation package worth \$800,000. The money, an administration official told the *Post*, would guarantee Miranda a lifestyle "comparable to that he would have enjoyed in his country of origin."

Spiked

The Miranda story appeared on the same day the *Post* ran a story alleging that Oliver North had asked Panama for help in setting up a fake shipment of Soviet-bloc arms to El Salvador—to create phony "proof" that Nicaragua was supporting the Salvadoran rebels. Sources tell the Central American Historical Institute that the *Post* had the Panama story in time for its February 3 issue, but decided not to run it, perhaps coincidentally, until after the contra aid vote.

Boll weasels

Percentage of House Democrats outside the Southern and border states who voted for President Reagan's contra aid package: 2. Percentage of House Democrats from the Deep South and Florida who voted for contra aid: 74.

Nerds of a feather

Gary Hart gave this analysis of the Bush-Rather incident to the *Boston Globe*: "If the vice president of the United States, who has been elected, says that he is telling the truth and says it over and over again, I don't think he ought to be badgered by anyone, journalist or anyone else, on the issue of his veracity and integrity."

Rated XY

A Screen Actors Guild study finds that last year, men got 86 percent of the leading roles in TV and movies.

It was my evil twin, officer

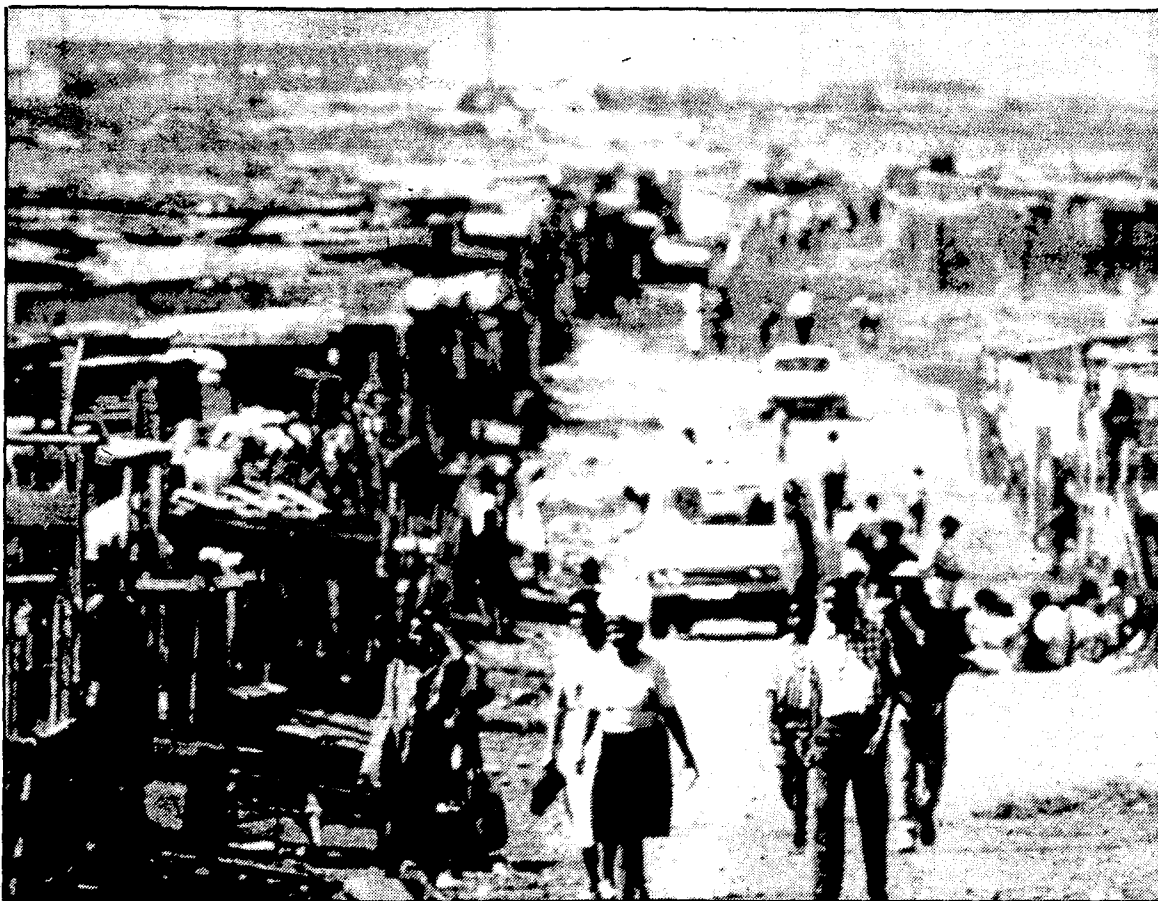
In the next three to five years, the DNA patterns of convicted criminals will be recorded by California police in order to "identify and prosecute repeat offenders," according to the January issue of *Nature* magazine.

No news is good news

A reporter for the *Albuquerque Journal* has been indicted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for conspiring to smuggle two Salvadoran women into the U.S. The indictment was brought in December in an apparent violation of rules designed to protect journalists from political harassment. The reporter, Demetria Martinez, says her "crime" consisted of interviewing the women in Juarez, Mexico, crossing the border on her own, and then meeting them again in El Paso. According to Martinez, the reason the INS brought the indictment is that "they want to scare journalists who want to seek out information about Central America."

Forbidden fruit

"I set out to raise a non-violent war-resisting son," Kay Casey of St. Peter, Minn., wrote in a letter to *The Nonviolent Activist* magazine. From her child's birth, Casey kept toy guns and war toys of any sort out of the boy's hands. When the son was 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he is now a sergeant. "You made weapons seem so attractive that now they're the one thing I want," he explained to his mother.



Three to six million blacks have been forcibly resettled.

Berkeley's disappearing sister city

Taking what Mayor Loni Hancock called "the next step to stop apartheid," Berkeley, Calif., became the first U.S. city to establish a "sister-community" relationship with a black South African township.

But she's worried that soon there may be no township left to return the favor.

Hancock said residents of the township Oukasie, which is near Johannesburg, are in danger of being forcibly relocated to a black township farther from white cities. She said that 7,000 residents of the "illegal" township have already been relocated but the remaining 10,000 are refusing to move. She said she hopes the heat of an international spotlight will protect the remaining residents.

But Eli Blitzer, first secretary to the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. said the township was not being relocated and that his government ended its policy on forced relocation in early 1986. Those who left Oukasie, he said, have left "voluntarily because of immense squatter problems."

"How have they managed to stay there," Blitzer asked, "if we wanted

to move them?"

Blitzer said that anyone who wished to stay in Oukasie could do so without government harassment, but the new policy allowed the government to "assist" anyone who wished to move.

But Dr. Pearl Marsh, director of the UC Berkeley-Stanford Joint Center on African Studies and member of the Sister-Community Project Board said even though the South African government claimed it was stopping the forced relocations, the policy has continued. She estimated that three to six million blacks have been forcibly resettled. "Forced relocation is the heart of apartheid," she said. "They're moving Oukasie, quite frankly, because the white community is expanding."

A *New York Times* article in late 1986 reported that "tens of thousands" of black South Africans had been forcibly relocated in the eight months since the government announced the policy was ending.

"We are being chased out of this place," said Marshal Buys, chairman of the Brit Civic Action Committee, organizing the resistance to the Oukasie relocation. "But we are planning to rebuild our township," said Buys, who spoke to *In These Times* by telephone from the township.

Buys said Oukasie residents were

being moved to Lethlabile, 35 kilometers away. He said the conditions in Lethlabile are in many ways worse than they are in Oukasie, where they are already abominable. Also, Buys said, Lethlabile is just outside the black homeland of Bophuthatswana and he believes that when enough residents of Oukasie have been moved there that the government will redraw the homeland's boundaries to include Lethlabile and thus take away citizenship for all who live there.

Though this has happened in other places, Blitzer denies this is the plan for Oukasie. "There is no such plan that I know of," he said.

Hancock said the people of Berkeley would be sending letters to residents of the township and the South African government as well. She said she hoped delegations could visit Oukasie in the future.

The South African government, however, questioned Berkeley's motives. "At a great distance," Blitzer said, "it would appear that this program is for local political consumption and has very little to do with the realities of South Africa. We welcome positive involvement from Americans."

Most South African newspapers, however, made it their lead story after it was announced.

—Howard Levine

Canada decides abortion is women's right

MONTREAL—Abortion in Canada is no longer a crime, following a landmark decision by this country's Supreme Court.

On January 28, after 18 months of

deliberation, Canada's highest court upheld the acquittal of Montreal doctor Henry Morgentaler and two colleagues, and overturned the section of the federal Criminal Code under which they had been charged.

"Bravo for the Supreme Court of Canada," Morgentaler declared as he emerged from the Ottawa courtroom. "Bravo for the women of Canada. Justice for the women of

Canada has finally arrived."

Prior to the court's 5-2 decision, which mirrors the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* ruling, abortions were permitted in accredited hospitals only after being approved by "therapeutic abortion committees," and only if the life or health of the woman were in danger.

The law and procedures it established were "a profound interference

with a woman's body," wrote Chief Justice Brian Dickson, and therefore violated Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, established in 1982.

In a more strongly worded separate judgment, Justice Bertha Wilson, the first woman to sit on the high court, argued that the right to reproductive freedom is "an integral part of modern woman's struggle to assert her dignity and worth as a human being," and that the existing law "asserts that the woman's capacity to reproduce is to be subject, not to her own control, but to that of the state." This, she held, was in direct violation of the Charter's provisions for "life, liberty and security of the person."

The court maintained that one of the principal problems with the existing law was its uneven application. There were wildly differing standards from hospital to hospital and from province to province as to what constituted a danger to a woman's life or health. This was further complicated by pitched battles between pro-choice and anti-abortion forces for control of publicly elected hospital boards, which

controlled the committees. Anti-abortion majorities on hospital boards would shut down the committees, which meant in many areas of this huge country abortions were unavailable, and women were forced to travel to Montreal, Toronto or the U.S. for the service.

The decision ends a 20-year legal battle for Morgentaler, who was first charged in 1968 after setting up an abortion clinic in Montreal. Morgentaler, who has become a pro-choice folk hero because of his relentless battle to liberalize this country's abortion laws, was acquitted four times by juries in Quebec and Ontario only to have higher courts overturn the jury decisions. The latest charges arose after Morgentaler was arrested for performing abortions in his newly opened Toronto clinic.

The ruling also marks the first time a criminal law has been struck down under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Canada's legal system previously operated under the British doctrine of "parliamentary supremacy," in which the legislature is the final arbiter of laws. The Char-

ter introduced the American concept of judicial review into Canadian jurisprudence, and this most recent judgment indicates Canada's courts are taking on the more activist role played by their American counterparts.

While criminal law is under federal jurisdiction in Canada, health care is a provincial responsibility. To ensure national uniformity, the federal government will now have to confer with the provinces on new abortion guidelines to replace those thrown out by the Supreme Court.

The battle for free choice is far from over. At least one province, British Columbia, has said its public health plan will only pay for abortions performed under the old committee system. Further court battles are sure to follow.

Ironically, the Canadian decision was released the same day the U.S. Senate, in an amendment to the Civil Rights Restoration Act, voted 56-39 to repeal 1975 regulations designed to prevent discrimination against women wanting abortions.

—Lawrence Kootnikoff

Ex-spies unite to fight covert action

Verne Lyon spent seven years in Cuba helping the CIA foster "mayhem, chaos and the destabilization of the Cuban economy."

At first he "thought what I was doing was best for the U.S. But I got to the point where I couldn't rationalize what I was doing. It certainly wasn't in the best interests of the U.S. or Cuba to contaminate milk supplies of school children or sabotage the water system."

Recently, Lyon and several other former participants in CIA covert plots formed the Association for Responsible Dissent (ARDIS), an organization dedicated to ending all covert action.

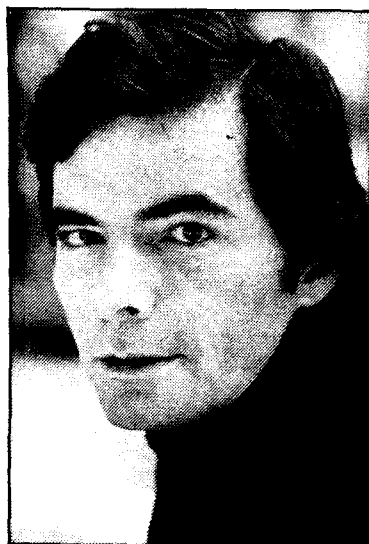
"There hasn't been a case yet, that I know of, of a covert action that has been productive," Lyon said.

Philip Roettinger, the president of ARDIS, who as a CIA case officer in 1954 helped overthrow the Guatemalan government, agrees.

"We Americans shouldn't be trying to overthrow and destabilize other countries," he said. "It's not our idea of how America is supposed to be. We believe in freedom, yet we're not permitting freedom elsewhere."

The Reagan administration has defended covert action on the grounds of national security. But, said ARDIS member and former CIA operative Ralph McGehee, "The attempt to [maintain the] empire is destroying the U.S." It hurts the country economically, undermines U.S. moral authority and subverts the Constitution. "We're becoming a second-rate power."

ARDIS' main purpose is education.



ARDIS member Philip Agee

ARDIS members have conducted press conferences and taken part in public forums and lectures. McGehee directs a research center in Herndon, Va., that has compiled more than 40 years' worth of CIA information from congressional documents, books and articles.

ARDIS is also trying to make covert action a major issue in the presidential campaign. Meetings with campaign representatives have already been held and more are planned. The most encouraging responses have come from Jesse Jackson and Michael Dukakis, who both vow to end all efforts at destabilizing and overthrowing governments.

ARDIS members currently include about 30 former intelligence agents, Roettinger said, and many others have expressed interest. While membership is open to anyone opposing covert action, ARDIS must screen applicants so the association itself does not fall victim to covert action.

In addition to Lyon, McGehee and Roettinger, members include:

- ARDIS Executive Director John

Stockwell, who served as the top CIA Official in the Angolan war;

- Daniel Ellsberg, the former Pentagon employee who in 1971 turned over the top-secret Pentagon study on the Vietnam War, known as the "Pentagon Papers," to the *New York Times*;

- Philip Agee, the CIA case officer whose 1975 book, *Inside the Company*, exposed much of the agency's Latin American operations;

- Ilona Maria Lorenz, Fidel Castro's former mistress who was recruited by the CIA to kill him; and

- S. Brian Willson, the peace demonstrator whose legs were severed recently by a Navy munitions train.

Although some ARDIS members have publicly criticized the CIA in the past, the organization provides a more effective forum for these views and "some strength in numbers," Lyon said.

"Many people who have been part of the national security system [and oppose covert action] find themselves alone. We're giving them a reason to come out of the woodwork and express themselves."

McGehee is confident that ARDIS can change public attitudes toward covert action. "When we go to speak, we are afforded a great deal of credibility because we participated in this, we were there. It's hard to discredit us," he said.

ARDIS members are buoyed by the favorable response they've received and by opinion polls showing large majorities of the American people opposed to contra aid and the secret Iran arms deals.

But Roettinger acknowledges, "It's going to be a tough fight. There're so many lies told to the American people, it's going to be hard to get the truth across."

—Dave Olson

Look it up

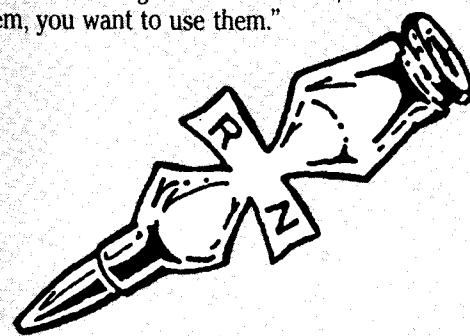
The index to George Bush's autobiography, *Looking Forward*, has no entry for "Nicaragua."

Suits me

The racketeering suit brought by the Christic Institute, a liberal Washington-based legal group, against Gen. John Singlaub and other contra backers has forced Singlaub to "pull back on his programs to help anti-Communist resistance movements around the world," according to the far-right *Human Events* magazine. Singlaub explains: "Instead of going out and pursuing the fund-raising for the U.S. Council for World Freedom to carry out the projects that we're working on, I'm forced to go out and raise funds to defend myself against this suit."

What about stamp collectors?

Soldier of Fortune managing editor James Graves explained to the *Chicago Tribune* why firing automatic weapons should not be banned by municipalities. "Machine-gun collectors are just like guys who collect Ming vases or old cars," he said. "And once you have them, you want to use them."



Snipers for Jesus

To make up any deficit left by U.S. "humanitarian aid," the contras have launched a sure-fire fund-raising scheme. The latest issue of the contra newsletter offers a "Cross of the Nicaraguan Resistance." "Hand-crafted by wounded freedom fighters" from a real bullet, each emblem is a unique "symbol of Christian faith and victory"—and only \$25 for gold plate, \$15 for bronze.

Dousing the flames

Forty-seven people were arrested in Rajasthan, India, for taking part last year in a *sati*—the ritual burning to death of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre. The father-in-law and brother-in-law of the 18-year-old widow have been charged with murder. According to *The Women's Watch* newsletter, Indian women's groups have been working to bring an end to the illegal but long-tolerated custom. A new law makes aiding and abetting a *sati* a crime punishable by death.

Love connection

The Lou Harris polling agency found that network TV presents nine kisses, five hugs, and one reference to sexual intercourse every prime viewing hour. But you would have to watch 50 hours to find one reference to birth control, the pollsters found.

Games people play

In Indio, Calif., the children are playing a new game: "La Migra." Bob Pratte of the *Riverside Press-Enterprise* describes the rules like this: the "illegal aliens" have to climb over a fence while the "border patrol" shoots at them with tennis balls. If the aliens scale the fence five times, they win and become U.S. citizens. In a reminder that for some of the children, La Migra is not necessarily just a game, San Diego County reported near-record immigration arrests for January—53,000.

Loco weed

Although the lawsuit against American Tobacco Co. for the lung-cancer death of Nathan Horton resulted in a hung jury last month, the trial did provide an inside look at the standards of the cigarette industry. Walter Dickerson, a retired maintenance worker from American Tobacco's Reidsville, N.C., plant, testified that company regularly sprayed tobacco and finished cigarettes with a carcinogenic insecticide. Dickerson, who left American Tobacco in 1979, also testified that janitors would sweep up tobacco dust to be used as "reconstituted" tobacco in cigarettes. American Tobacco's brands include Pall Malls, Carltons and Lucky Strikes.



Scandals lead to scandals, and they all point to Attorney General Meese

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

If there were any doubt in my mind that four years from now you could look back and say Ed Meese has fulfilled the standards that I've set for this office, then I would retire right now and withdraw.

—Edwin Meese speaking before the Senate Judiciary Committee on March 1985

EDWIN MEESE, THE TRIBUNE OF CONSERVATIVE justice, has become the most scandal-ridden attorney general ever. He is now being investigated by a third special prosecutor; he has already appeared seven times before grand juries. One scandal leads to another, and each new scandal strengthens the web of suspicious circumstance surrounding past scandals.

The latest revelation, stemming from Special Prosecutor James McKay, suggests that Meese did nothing to prevent his friend E. Robert Wallach from illegally trying to bribe Israeli officials on behalf of the Bechtel Group, Inc., which was attempting a pipeline from Iraq to the Red Sea and wanted Israeli assurance that they wouldn't blow it up. In the course of investigating Meese's role in the Wedtech scandal, McKay discovered that Wallach sent Meese a memorandum about the bribe. In turn, Meese's role in the pipeline affair has added further weight to suspicions that a lucrative "blind trust" a Wallach associate helped Meese set

up in 1985 may have been a payoff for his services.

So far, none of the special prosecutors investigating Meese have discovered grounds for a criminal indictment. What they have found is that he received financial benefits from individuals either before they received presidential appointments or after he did significant favors for them. But Meese has always denied any connection between the events—"I have no specific recollection," he says—and the individuals have not incriminated Meese. As a result, there is an extensive appearance of impropriety, but no solid evidence of criminality.

Cronyism: The investigations of Meese have occurred in overlapping waves. When he came up for Senate confirmation as attorney general in February 1984, the White House agreed to the appointment of an independent counsel, Jacob Stein, to look into allegations against Meese. The first went back to October 1980, before Ronald Reagan was elected. Rep. Donald Albosta's House subcommittee came up with a letter from Reagan campaign official Max Hugel to Meese describing briefing books that had been purloined from the Carter campaign. When Senate Judiciary Committee member Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) asked Meese about the letter, he replied, "I have no knowledge of the Carter material."

Most of the allegations, however, concerned Meese's financial relationships with

individuals who were later given Reagan administration appointments. In Reagan's first term, when Meese was counselor to the president, Great American Federal Savings and Loan Association of San Diego lent him more than \$420,000 and took no action when Meese fell 15 months delinquent on four mortgages that he held on two houses. Five months later bank Chairman Gordon Luce was named as alternative U.S. representative to the UN and Edwin Gray, the bank's first vice president, was appointed chairman of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board.

The sale of Meese's house was arranged by Thomas J. Barrack, who loaned the purchaser of the house \$70,000 and later forgave the debt. Barrack was later named deputy undersecretary of the interior. When he was counselor, Meese also got \$60,000 in loans from tax accountant John R. McKean, who was later appointed to the board of governors of the U.S. Postal Service.

Undisclosed loans: Two years after Meese was confirmed as attorney general, McKay was appointed to investigate the Wedtech scandal. In April 1987, after Meese's ties to Wedtech officials Wallach and W. Franklyn Chinn were revealed, Meese belatedly recused himself from the investigation, and agreed that McKay could extend his investigation to cover Meese himself. At the same time, Iran-contra Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh honed in on the attorney general's initial investigation of the scandal in November 1986.

Wedtech events go back to the administration's first term in office. In 1981 and 1982 Wallach, Meese's close friend and attorney, convinced the White House counselor to intervene vigorously to help the South Bronx company secure a \$32 million no-bid contract from the Pentagon. Both Wallach and Chinn were subsequently indicted for attempting to bribe government officials on Wedtech's behalf.

McKay discovered in May 1985 that Wallach, who told business associates that he was "Meese's boy," had sought the attorney general's help in getting government insurance for the Iraqi pipeline deal. Meese again intervened on Wallach's behalf. That same month Wallach introduced Meese to Chinn. Meese had promised the Senate Judiciary Committee that he would sell off his wife's stock holdings. He did so and invested some of them—about \$55,000 worth—in what he claimed was a "limited blind partnership" with Chinn. As the Office of Government Ethics later charged, Meese had not really set up a blind trust. A blind trust must be arranged by a third party and officially sanctioned by the ethics office. He had also failed to list the trust in his financial disclosure form, saying he had "inadvertently omitted" it.

But there was more. During the two years that Chinn administered the trust, he parlayed Meese's \$55,000 into \$100,000. According to a *Business Week* investigation, Chinn could not have secured these profits without the use of undisclosed loans or preferential treatment. For instance, one Meese stock deal would have required Chinn to put up \$341,000 of Meese's money—far more than Meese had in his account.

The independent counsel is now investigating not only whether Meese was aware of Wallach's intentions—it is a violation of the 1979 Corrupt Practices Act for a

businessman to bribe a foreign official—but whether Wallach and Chinn paid him off for his help by expanding his stock earnings by 83 percent. Meese has denied all charges. Wallach's memo, he told the press, provided "no grounds" for further inquiry by himself.

McKay is also investigating another potential scandal involving Meese. In 1986 he tried to persuade telephone company officials to support loosening the restrictions on the "Baby Bells"—the regional telephone companies created by the 1984 breakup of AT&T. He also endorsed legislation for this purpose.

Meese got financial benefits from people he did favors for, but denies that there's any connection.

But contrary to his own disclosure forms, Meese owned Baby Bell stock at the time he was pleading the companies' case. This appears to be a clear violation of conflict of interest statutes, but Meese claims innocence. He did not sell the stocks at the time, he told a Senate committee, because he couldn't find the stock certificates.

A cloud: Meese will probably not be indicted by Iran-contra counsel Walsh, but the Select Committee's final report suggested that he participated in a coverup. According to it, a "cloud" hangs over Meese's November 22-23, 1986, investigation of the contra fund diversion. Once Meese learned of it, he stopped bringing notetakers to interviews with high officials, and did not introduce criminal lawyers in the case. He allowed, in effect, both Adm. John Poindexter and Lt. Col. Oliver North sufficient time to destroy evidence. And he interviewed key players like former CIA Director William Casey in the most cursory manner. Meese's later comments to the press, the report said, "were both mistaken and inconsistent with information that had been received during the...inquiry."

He may also have blocked an early investigation of North's contra supply network. In early 1986, U.S. attorney Jeffrey Feldman in Miami stumbled on North's network while investigating arms shipments to the contras. But after Meese met with Feldman's superior, further investigation by Feldman was blocked.

Most conservatives have leapt to Meese's defense. According to *National Review* Publisher William Rusher, Meese has been the victim of liberal slander. Liberals, Rusher wrote in his syndicated column last week, "have kept up a steady drumbeat of unsubstantiated charges, wild speculations, and empty innuendos against Mr. Meese." But White House support for Meese finally appears to be waning.

When White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker was asked on January 31 whether Meese should resign, he avoided the question. "I see no reason on earth for the president to take any action unless and until it's made to appear that Mr. Meese has done something wrong," Baker said. Pressure for Meese's resignation is expected to mount, not only from Nancy Reagan, who doesn't want Meese's troubles to overshadow her husband's final year, but from Republican operatives who fear that Meese could damage the party's chances in November. □

By David Moberg

GREENFIELD, IOWA

IN 1980 RALPH MITCHELL FOLLOWED HIS LIFELONG Republican instincts and voted for Ronald Reagan. On February 8 he was sitting on a folding metal chair at a Democratic caucus in this small town 50 miles southwest of Des Moines to throw his support to Jesse Jackson.

Earlier this year Jackson had visited Mitchell's modest 200-acre grain and cattle farm. Later a few people asked him why he'd let a black on his farm. But Mitchell, 55, scorned that reaction and was impressed with what Jackson said. "I just like his approach and

CAMPAIGN 88

what he stands for," Mitchell said. "He's down to earth with the average person. Everybody would love to see him be president, but they won't vote for him because he's black, and that's a shame."

But when the huddling and maneuvering in various corners of meeting rooms and the kitchen of Greenfield's Multi-Purpose Center were all over, the 98 Democrats in Greenfield's caucus sent two-thirds of their delegates to the county convention committed to Jackson. The remainder of the delegates were evenly split between Rep. Richard Gephardt (Mitchell's second choice) and Gov. Michael Dukakis. It was an extraordinary but not altogether surprising margin for Jackson, who had set up his state campaign headquarters in Greenfield after a warm, overflowing crowd turned out for his first visit a year ago.

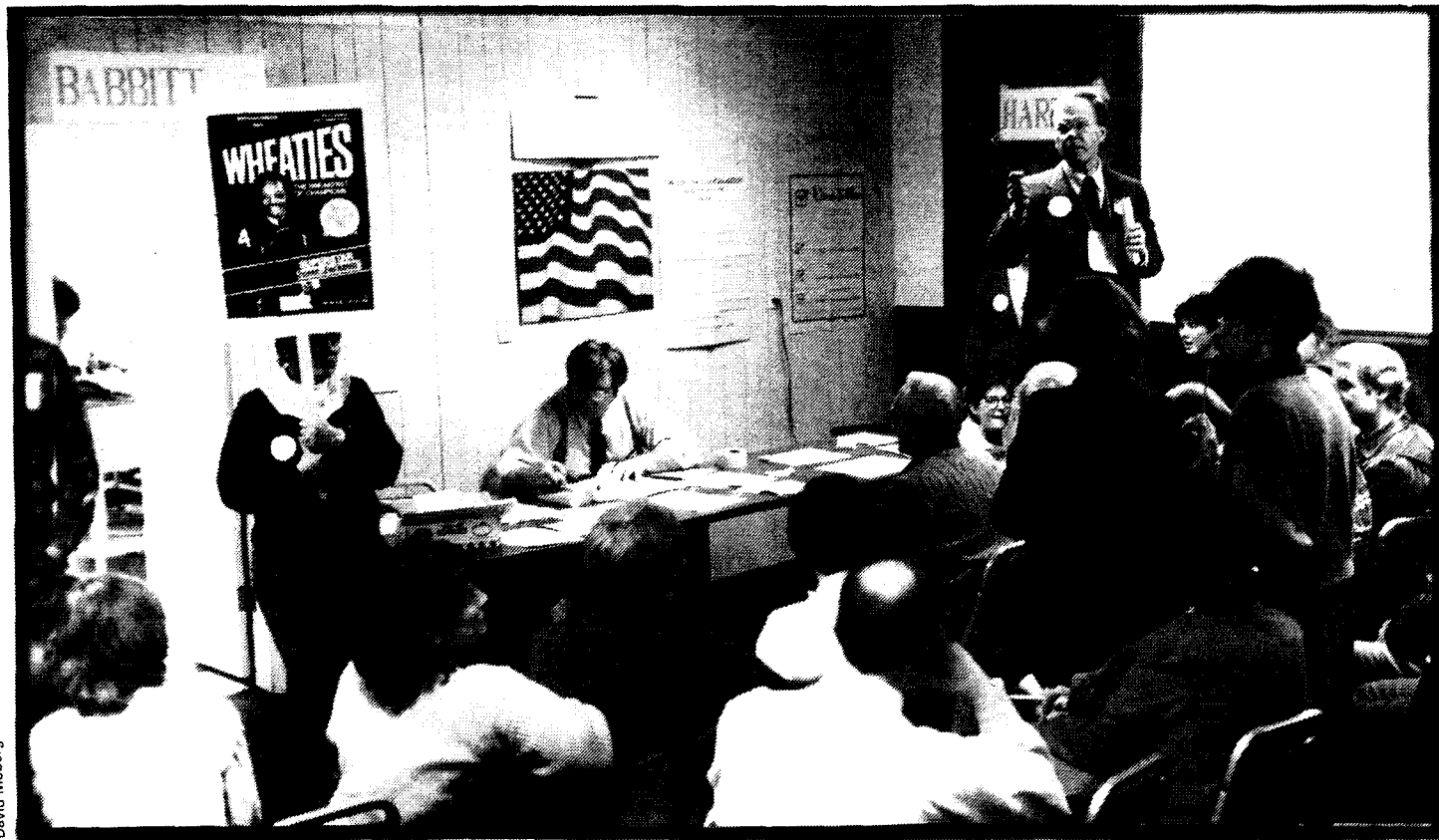
The Jackson factor: Statewide Jackson got only 8.8 percent of the delegates, less than his double-digit goal and roughly in line with what polls have shown for the past year. Yet his fourth-place showing was "significant," according to state Democratic Party Chairwoman Bonnie Campbell. It may also represent a breakthrough to a broader coalition for Jackson in a state that is only 1 percent black.

But Jackson's impact in Iowa went far beyond his votes. Dixon Terry, a dairy farmer from near Greenfield and state chairman of the Iowa League of Rural Voters, argued that Jackson had changed the whole political culture of Iowa and challenged many Iowans, especially older people, to confront their feelings about race.

Jackson also introduced issues and themes that continually challenged his fellow Democratic contenders. For example, all of the candidates except former Gov. Bruce Babbitt eventually supported a farm program that would manage supply to avoid overproduction and maintain adequate prices for basic commodities. But in the agricultural policy debate, Jackson broadened the issue to concentrate on corporate domination of agricultural suppliers and processors—and several other candidates followed his lead.

Even Gephardt's resurgence in January to win the caucus—with 31 percent of the delegates compared to 27 percent for Sen. Paul Simon and 22 percent for Dukakis—was in part inspired by Jackson's tough criticisms of government and corporate abuses. Gephardt, the conservative, pragmatic, technocratic congressional insider, touched

Democrats' foggy road out of Iowa



The Greenfield caucus committed two-thirds of its delegates to the county convention to Jesse Jackson.

David Moberg

a raw nerve with his TV ads attacking foreign trade barriers. Jackson, on the other hand, criticizes U.S. corporations for taking jobs overseas, then shipping products back. Despite urgings from many advisers, Simon did not adopt a "populist" attack on corporations or the rich and delivered a mushy if well-meaning liberal appeal that failed to recreate the lead he once held. Even though Simon's old-fashioned Democrat appeal seemed tailor-made for Iowa's disproportio-

nately older caucus-goers, he even lost ground among the elderly to Gephardt, who once backed a Social Security freeze.

While campaigns blew hot and cold for Gephardt, Simon and Hart, Dukakis held steady. He did best in urban areas, apparently primarily among white-collar and middle-class Democrats. But he also scored well among farmers near the Minnesota border, thanks in part to his endorsement by Minnesota's popular commissioner of ag-

riculture. Former Gov. Bruce Babbitt never clicked, ending up with 6 percent of the delegates. Despite the outsized Jackson support, the Greenfield caucus was not completely atypical. Participation was up; many attendees were still undecided when they arrived; and there seemed to be generally warm feelings about most of the candidates even among those voters with strong preferences.

Continued on page 22

Democracy at the diner: the caucus at Doc and Jo's

By Osha Davidson

MECHANICSVILLE, IOWA

MARY BROWN, BRUCE BABBITT'S LONE supporter in the Pioneer Precinct, will not be moved. Seated beneath a single sheet of yellow paper thumb-tacked to the wall above her and bearing her candidate's name, the elderly woman persists like a rock against the tide. Her face is closed and her arms folded in an impressive demonstration of the kind of Midwestern defiance achieved only by farm women well into their seventh decade.

It is February 8, 7:35 p.m.: caucus night. Fifty-nine Democratic Party loyalists are crowded into a proverbial smoke-filled back room at Doc and Jo's restaurant on the edge of this tiny eastern Iowa town to decide the fate of the six remaining presidential hopefuls.

"Come on over to our side," a muscular young Michael Dukakis-backer with his sleeves rolled up to the elbows yells at Mary Brown from across the room. "I'll give you a dollar."

Brown isn't impressed or amused. She tugs at her sweater's right sleeve and sits up even straighter—if that's possible.

"It took me a long time to decide," she says quietly but firmly and lets it go at that. It is rebuke to those who would have her flitting like a butterfly from one candidate

to another.

Dave Ferguson, a middle-aged party official who is running the caucus, looks up from the front table where he and two assistants are tabulating results.

"Well then Mary," he says, adjusting his glasses, "you stick right in there." Several people applaud.

Iowans, especially rural Iowans, are well known for their resistance to change. A retired farmer once told me that his father was the first person in the area to try raising soybeans back in the early part of this century when corn was the undisputed king.

"It probably took quite a while to catch on," I remarked.

"Oh no," he assured me. "Why, some of the neighbors were giving the new crop a try just six or seven years later."

Even among Iowans, the people of this area are famous for their independent ways. In 1931, when the government began testing all dairy cows in Iowa for tuberculosis, scores of armed area farmers vowed to shoot the first son-of-a-bitch to touch a Cedar County cow. The National Guard had to be called in to protect the veterinarians.

"Not that we thought it was a bad idea to test for TB," said a local farmer who was a teenager during the Cow War. "In fact, most everybody thought it was a good idea. We

just didn't like being told we had to do it."

Something to say: The caucus, which supposed to start at 7 p.m., doesn't get underway until 7:25 when Ferguson, a quietly good-looking man with short gray hair, droopy mustache and glasses, gets up in front of the room at the spot usually occupied by the salad bar, clears his throat and calls out, "Could I have your attention please."

The back room of Doc and Jo's is your basic sit-yourself-down-and-eat small town restaurant dining room, with a decor that is simple but comfortable. If locals get the urge to eat at a fancier place they can drive over to the city of Cedar Rapids, 30 miles to the west. But few people do—except for weddings parties or silver anniversaries.

The first order of business, before breaking up into candidate "preference groups," is to call for resolutions, issues that people present think should become planks in the party platform.

"I got something to say," says a voice from the side of the room.

Larry Domer, an avuncular man who, in his black-rimmed glasses and sweater-vest, looks like a rural Ozzie Nelson, stands up to inveigh against Lee Iacocca's moving plants down to Mexico, Japan's unfair trade practices and the line-item veto. He offered no resolutions and ends by declaring himself as "undecided right now" about a presidential candidate.

There is a thick moment of silence then, as if everyone in the room is steeling themselves for the main event, the ritual for which

Continued on page 22

By Salim Muwakkil

THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI) has never been a big hit in the black community. Even before news of the agency's vicious harassment campaign against Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the '60s was revealed, many blacks had already learned to be wary of J. Edgar Hoover's grim legions. The heroic "G-men" of national mythology may have existed, but the FBI agents with which most blacks had contact were more likely to be well-armed white men dedicated to protecting the racist status quo.

Since 1962 the agency has hired more African-Americans; they now represent about 4 percent of the agents. But according to at least one black employee, the agency's status quo is still racist. Donald Rochon, an agent since 1981, charged in a federal discrimination suit last November that fellow agents in two offices subjected him to an astounding ordeal of racial harassment and threats.

RACE RELATIONS

Among the court papers filed by Rochon was the recommended decision of an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) hearing that bolsters the black agent's charges. The Justice Department adopted the EEOC decision. Rochon initiated the EEOC proceeding after repeated complaints to his superiors fell on deaf ears. The EEOC, which compiled a 66-page report on its hearing of Rochon's charges, found a clear pattern of racial harassment. The commission report also revealed that the FBI retaliated against Rochon when he lodged formal complaints.

Esprit de corps: Rochon charged that the racial incidents began in the Omaha office, within a year of his 1982 graduation from the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. The EEOC report chronicles a series of "racially obnoxious pranks" and harassing incidents that took place in Omaha. The 37-year-old agent said the most distressing incident involved an instance in which a fellow agent defaced a family portrait. A picture of an ape was pasted over the face of Rochon's son.

Rochon said the abuse continued and intensified after he was transferred to the Chicago field office. According to the suit, his family was the target of regular late night phone calls, many of which were obscene and focused on interracial sex. Rochon's wife is white. The suit also disclosed that Rochon received a number of letters that threatened his murder or mutilation and threatened his wife with sexual assault. The matter was investigated internally and a FBI handwriting analysis revealed the material was written by a white agent also assigned in Chicago. The author of this offensive material was given a two-week suspension without pay; but other white agents in the Chicago office chipped in to pay his salary during that time, according to the suit.

During the course of the EEOC's hearing, Herbert H. Hawkins Jr., then the special agent-in-charge of the Omaha office, said he thought the racial pranks were positive signs of "esprit de corps." The report noted that Hawkins was aware of Rochon's complaints but took no formal action.

Rochon's well-documented suit has sparked a furor in the Reagan administration and in both houses of Congress. White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said, "The president is very upset about that (the Rochon suit) and has asked the director of the FBI

Race-baiting charge sparks probe of FBI



Agent Donald Rochon was subjected to a rare and overt display of racism.

to look into it." In addition to the EEOC probe into the matter, several congressional hearings on this matter are also planned.

Congressional outrage: Sen. Joseph Biden (D-DE), chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, announced last month that he will hold hearings to determine if Rochon's experience is an isolated case or systemic throughout the FBI. Biden is holding the hearings at the prompting of Rep. William H. Gray III (D-PA). "When the Congressman heard about these allegations involving the FBI he exploded," said Gray aide Charlene Williams. "He couldn't believe that such things are still happening in this day and age and within one of the major agencies responsible for enforcing this country's civil rights laws."

Rep. Don Edwards (D-CA), chair of the House judiciary subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights, which oversees the FBI, will initiate hearings in the House. In addition

to those charges of racism, other bureau hijinks are keeping Edwards busy. His subcommittee already has its hands full with hearings scheduled on recent revelations about the FBI's surveillance of domestic groups involved in legitimate political protest (see *In These Times*, Feb. 16).

"We may hold hearings to look into the reasons why nothing was done for three years after the black agent made his complaint," said Julian Epstein, an aide to Rep. John Conyers (D-MI). Conyers is the chair of the House judiciary subcommittee on criminal justice. "It's inconceivable to the Congressman why the Department of Justice's criminal division failed to take action," Epstein added. "He's very concerned about the reasons for that oversight."

An aberration: The FBI's first black agent wasn't appointed until 1962. Today out of the agency total of 9,443, 403 are African-

American, 406 are Hispanic, 113 are Asian and 41 are Native American. Of the 59 field offices across the country only Philadelphia has a black special agent-in-charge. There are no Hispanics in that position. In fact, one of the FBI's highest-ranking Hispanics filed a suit last year that alleged Hispanics are routinely denied promotions.

Rochon has since been assigned to the Philadelphia office. Special Agent-in-Charge Wayne G. Davis, one of only three blacks ever to head an FBI field office, was surprised and angered by Rochon's charges. "I can't comment on the specifics of his allegations, but I can tell you that many of us were shocked by them," Davis said. "In my 25 years of service in the FBI, I've never experienced anything like agent Rochon has. If what he charged is true, I'd have to say that his treatment was an aberration. The FBI generally takes great care to treat its employees fairly."

Davis conceded that in the bureau's early days, Hoover was probably reluctant to make the FBI truly representative of U.S. society. "There was a time," he said, "when I knew every black special agent. During the early '60s, however, the Kennedy administration applied a lot of pressure to get more black agents appointed and although some reluctance remained we made a sincere effort to become more representative."

Unimpressive totals: The 25-year veteran said the institutional reluctance to change the FBI's racial makeup is less an expression of racism than benign clannishness. But, he added, even that attitude is seldom manifested in the treatment of blacks within the agency. "There was probably much more prejudice being exhibited outside the FBI, within society in general, than there was inside," he noted. "There's a certain pride that goes with being a part of the FBI, and there's a powerful camaraderie among employees." Davis admitted that the current number of minority agents is "a very unimpressive total," but despaired that the current spurt of negative publicity may hamper the FBI's ongoing recruitment efforts.

Another agent is significantly less upbeat about the future of blacks in the bureau. Not surprisingly, he requested anonymity. "The agency has changed, but it has not changed quickly enough," he said. "Without continuous outside pressure, nothing would ever happen in this agency. The institutional inertia is just too strong."

Although they were disinclined from making a specific charge, several FBI employees suggested that Rochon provoked the treatment he received by some quirk in his personality. Why else, they asked, would he be subjected to such a rare and overt display of racism? Also, there are indications that his interracial marriage played a large part in activating latent racial hostilities. But others, including many long-time bureau observers, pointed to the Rochon case as a prime example of the racism they contend is an indelible part of the FBI culture.

The series of investigations and upcoming congressional hearings should at least provide explanations for the racist behavior Rochon encountered in Omaha and Chicago. Sen. Biden said FBI Director Sessions "seemed very upset" by the incidents. "I have complete faith that he means what he says when he says he wants to get to the bottom of it."

Biden also urged Sessions to "go beyond this and see to it that the composition of FBI agents begins to reflect the composition of society—in short, more black agents." □

A black agent with the Chicago field office received letters threatening his murder or mutilation, and his wife, who is white, with sexual assault. A handwriting analysis revealed they were written by a white agent also assigned in Chicago.



FOOD POLICY

Government commodities have become the lifeblood of America's booming emergency food industry.

Reagan on hunger: let them eat cheese...if there is any

By Kathryn Phillips

LOS ANGELES

S EVEN YEARS AGO, RONALD REAGAN DECIDED to solve an embarrassing farm surplus problem and generate some good PR. He began giving away cheese—tons of five-pound blocks that had been sitting uneaten in government warehouses, the result of federal purchases designed to keep dairy prices up.

Today, with Congress' help, that giveaway has evolved into the last safety net before starvation for millions of Americans. The cheese and other items continue to be distributed under the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) through a vast network of volunteer-dominated food banks and neighborhood pantries.

But the federal government is beginning to clip the net's strings. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) says that because of various commodity giveaway programs and changing farm policy—including a federal buyout and slaughter of dairy cattle in 1986—warehouse surpluses have been cut to bare bones. So this year the agency is going to have fewer commodities to distribute to the emergency food network that feeds the poor.

And it's unclear whether any commodities will be left for the emergency network next year. The USDA says estimates of available surplus won't be available until the spring. But there are at least two indications that the surplus food for emergency programs won't be available much longer.

"The [surplus level] numbers we have been able to put our hands on are pretty grim," said John Arnold, of Second Harvest, a Chicago-based organization that represents about 200 non-profit food banks around the country. In addition, farm policy is moving away from federal purchases of surplus. For Congress and the White House "to maintain [the emergency commodities program] at anything close to current levels would be a 100 percent turnaround," Arnold said.

Nothing sexy: Government commodities have become the lifeblood of America's booming emergency food industry. They ac-

count for about one-third of the food the banks distribute, Arnold estimated. Last year alone the USDA shipped more than one billion pounds of commodities from its warehouses to food banks. These are not sexy foods. No baby carrots or range-fed chickens are included, just processed cheese, dried milk, honey, rice, butter, flour and cornmeal.

Many food banks—the emergency network's equivalent of wholesalers—solicit food donations from supermarket chains and farms to supplement the commodities. But others rely almost entirely on commodities. And practically all food banks rely exclusively on the government for cheese and milk.

"Without commodities, we will more than likely shut our food program down," said Tom Settle, a former loan officer who left commercial banking to direct the four-and-a-half-year-old Caring Hands food program in Los Angeles. That program fed 119,000 people last year. About half of the 5.5 million pounds of food it distributed came from TEFAP.

So far, the Reagan administration has taken no steps to fill in the gap that will be left in their haphazard food policy by the diminished TEFAP surplus.

"To take a program down and not come up with a replacement is irresponsible," said Paul Del Ponte, a spokesman for the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) in Washington D.C.

Hunger under Reagan: To do so, though, would be consistent with the Reagan administration's history. Hunger advocates bitterly recall the 1983 suggestion by then-White House counsel Ed Meese that there is no hunger in America.

In pre-Reagan days, the food stamp program was the key element of national hunger policy. But shortly after taking office he proceeded to freeze or cut food stamp budgets. The fiscal 1981 food stamp benefits expenditure was \$13.19 billion (in 1987 dollars), according to the center on Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington D.C. Five years later, the expenditure had dropped by more than \$1 billion to \$11.7 billion (in 1987 dollars).

The Reagan administration also directed

changes in food stamp eligibility rules and made it more difficult for the working poor to qualify. At the same time, unemployment increased and the characteristics of the employed shifted. As higher-paid factory jobs dried up, more people began working at low-paying service jobs. The cost of living increased but the minimum wage didn't.

If the Reagan administration could be said to have a hunger policy, it is one geared toward increasing rather than decreasing the problem.

In the early and mid-'70s, "the generally accepted number was that 1 in 12 Americans was hungry. Now the accepted number is 1 in 5," said Second Harvest's Arnold, who is a veteran anti-hunger advocate. "My entire productive adult life has been spent losing ground."

Ironically, an indication of this lost ground is the growth of the food bank network. In 1982 Second Harvest counted in its member-

ship 44 food banks that provided free and dramatically discounted food to 8,500 charitable feeding programs. Today Second Harvest counts 204 food bank members serving more than 38,000 feeding programs that are run by armies of volunteers.

Many anti-hunger veterans who have watched the food banking system become, almost by chance, an integral part of the national hunger policy are dismayed. It should be an emergency program, they say, not the vulnerable backbone of federal policy.

"The schlepping of commodities around the country is not the most cost-effective way to feed hungry people," said Second Harvest's Arnold.

Congressional hope: Several Congress members are looking at ways to address the hunger issue, according to FRAC's Del Ponte. Within the next two months, he expects to see hunger legislation introduced and believes it will include an increase in food stamp funding.

But that won't be enough, based on what Cathleen Carstens has seen. She helps run the Saints Peter and Paul Poverty Program food pantry that is sponsored by an order of nuns in a working-class neighborhood in Wilmington, Calif. It is an industrial suburb of Los Angeles, dominated by oil refineries. From the backyard patio of a modest convent, Carstens and a team of volunteers, members of the parish, pass out bags of groceries to the unemployed and working poor four mornings a week.

Carstens keeps detailed records of who comes for the food and why. Last year the pantry served 4,192 families representing 19,620 people. About 67 percent of the recipients were there because the household wage earner—a full-time employee who was paid at or below minimum wage—didn't earn enough money to last the month.

Increasing food stamp benefits would help some of the people Carstens sees. A higher minimum wage would probably help even more. □

A movement to battle hunger in California

California anti-hunger activists complain that funding has been impossible to pry out of a governor whose social policy nearly mirrors that of the White House and a legislature that can't muster an override vote.

Recently they stopped complaining and started taking action that circumvents the state capital. In November a coalition that includes various social service advocates and some business groups began circulating a petition to place on the November 1988 ballot a statewide initiative that would raise money for social services that fight hunger and homelessness.

The initiative appears to be the first of its kind in the country. It also seems guaranteed to get on the ballot as signature gatherers have already collected more signatures than are required.

The initiative avoids the sticky issue of raising taxes. Instead it would establish new fines for health- and safety-code violations that are cited but rarely prosecuted. The initiative's key creator, Conway Collis, estimates the fines would raise \$50 million to \$90 million in the first year.

The money would be used for direct grants to service agencies and to back a \$150 million revenue bond to build low-income housing. The initiative also would

create savings bonds in small denominations (\$25, \$50 and \$100) for small investors. These bonds would help finance low-income housing. But more important, they would probably make the program more appealing to middle-class voters who don't think they have anything to gain from new construction of low-income housing.

The initiative creates a new state board to administer the program. It also sets up a system that would force officials in each county to provide a plan that includes data on local hunger and homelessness and profiles what is being done to address these issues. A local task force that would include representatives of service agencies would then help dole out the state funds, sidestepping direct control by county boards of supervisors who have been reluctant to fund innovative programs.

Collis, an elected member of the State Board of Equalization that oversees business and industrial taxes, says the initiative is not expected to face much opposition. Organizers were careful to involve business groups in the initiative's planning. To oppose it, Collis said, would be the same as saying slumlords and operators of filthy restaurant kitchens should not be fined. **K.P.**

By William Gasperini

MANAGUA

DURING THIS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR, much of America's attention is focused on voting. It's possible, however, that February's most important vote did not take place in Iowa or New Hampshire, but on Capitol Hill February 3. That was the night the House of Representatives decided in large measure the fate of Nicaragua.

Most Nicaraguans were on edge as the vote neared, listening to radios or—in a few lucky places—watching Cable News Network satellite transmissions of the congressional debate over President Reagan's request for \$36.2 million in additional contra aid.

NICARAGUA

This is the way Nora Muchnik described her feelings that evening in a article published in a Managua newspaper: "How incredible, all of Nicaragua depends on the 'yes' or 'no' of a few indecisive gringo Congressmen. Our immediate future lay in the hands of people who don't know us, don't understand who we are, how we think, what we want. They seemed to possess a kind of insecurity you might see in psychiatric cases. To be or not to be, señores, let's go—an entire people want to know if we'll see gradual progress toward peace, or if everything will go for more war."

As the aid request was defeated, Americans and Nicaraguans who had been conducting a vigil in front of the U.S. Embassy broke into cheers. But for most Nicaraguans, February 3 did not represent a victory—just



A mural in Managua depicting the U.S. as death. Most Nicaraguans closely watched the recent U.S. contra aid vote.

Contra war may enter a new phase

a short note of optimism in an otherwise grim situation.

"This does not mean the war will disappear," President Daniel Ortega said the next day in a government response. "The war will go on as long as the U.S. administration promotes, directs and organizes it. We cannot lower our guard."

Many observers felt that Ortega's message, which was far from conciliatory, hinted at a tougher bargaining position in future steps of the regional peace process. Costa Rican President Oscar Arias criticized Ortega's apparent posturing, but he also praised the vote as giving new opportunity to the peace plan. The Nicaraguan opposition echoed Arias, saying that the Sandinistas now "had no excuses" not to comply fully with the plans terms.

Terror doesn't stop: Meanwhile, in the countryside the House vote coincided with new horrors that have long characterized the contra war. The day before the vote, 11 people died in a hail of machine-gun and mortar fire as contras struck the Santa Elisa farm cooperative in Boaco province east of the capital. It was the latest in a series of brutal attacks in recent months that have left scores of people dead or maimed, many of them children.

Less than 24 hours after the vote, contras ambushed a truck near the far northern town of Quilali. They detonated three U.S.-made claymore mines and fired on the truck, killing 18—four of them babies—and seriously wounding 18 more. It was the largest toll in a single incident in months.

Yet perhaps the most ominous attack came two days later in the neighboring town of Wiwili. As a procession of civilians, mostly women and children, wound its way through the tiny town protesting the Quilali massacre, someone threw a grenade at the marchers. Nine people were killed and 10 more seriously wounded.

The Wiwili attack brought fears that the war may be entering a new phase—one in which frustrated contras step up acts of sabotage and urban terror after official U.S. aid runs out. But aid may continue to flow in. Congress is considering a new Democratic proposal for "humanitarian" aid and U.S. sympathizers are raising private funds. In any event, the contras have enough weapons to continue their military operations for several months.

Masaya backlash: Meanwhile, the war continues to divide Nicaraguans. This was apparent on February 8 in Masaya, 20 miles

south of Managua. That day authorities conducted an extensive search to round up military draft evaders, and many residents were angered. Later a group protesting the roundup stoned a police station and the office of the Sandinista youth organization. Pro-government demonstrators fought back, and the protestors managed to set two vehicles on fire before the police restored order.

The incident may presage more visible signs of popular discontent, which the Sandinistas charge is precisely what the U.S. and the contras want. But it also reflects the increasing boldness of the internal opposition since the January 19 lifting of the state of emergency.

Recent civic political protests have noticeably sharpened in tone. In some cases demonstrators have even shouted support for the contras. The draft has become one of the opposition's main protest themes, amid additional reports of forced recruitment in other areas of the country.

Some opposition leaders are encouraged by the steady progression of Sandinista concessions since the August signing of the regional peace plan. "They are being forced slowly but surely along," said Carlos Huembes, leader of the opposition Democratic Coordinator coalition in Managua. "They said *La Prensa* would never open until the war stopped, and now it is publishing. They also said they'd never talk directly or indirectly with the contras. Many things have been said and then it all changes. The war is not just military but political."

On the diplomatic front: Although the first round of cease-fire talks between the Sandinistas and the contras were remarkably cordial, the contras' strategy changed after the House rejected new aid. Contra leaders postponed the second round of talks scheduled for February 10. Apparently they were not ready to negotiate from their weakened position. As *In These Times* went to press, however, new talks had been scheduled for February 18 to 20.

William Gasperini is *In These Times'* Nicaragua correspondent.

FOCUS ON ZAIRE

LYNCHPIN OF U.S. POLICY IN SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA

An International Conference on Zaire's Internal Conditions, Regional Role and International Connections

A Critical Look at Mobutu's Regime

- Mobutu and the CIA: The Ties That Bind
- The Israeli Connection
- The Zaire South Africa Alliance: Angola and Mozambique on Dangerous Ground
- Human Rights and Mobutu: A History of Terror
- The Legislative Challenge to Mobutu: The Delors Bill to Terminate U.S. Military Aid to Zaire
- The Church in Zaire: Historic Role Current Options
- Political Refugees: The Plight of Political Opposition
- Eyewitness Reports from Missionaries, Peace Corps Volunteers, Zairian Exiles
- After Mobutu

- **Pending Confirmation:** Colored Lunch with Presidential Candidates who will Share Their Views on Southern and Central Africa and Zaire

Speakers:

- Collette Broeckman, Africanist, Brussels
- Rev. Dibaba-Wa-Said, Zairian, Zaire
- Makidi-Ku-Ntina, Zairian, Zaire
- William Minter, Zairian, Zaire
- Serge Mukendi, Zairian, Zaire
- Dr. N'Zongola Ntola, Zairian, Zaire
- Ann Seidman, Zairian, Zaire
- John Stockwell, Zairian, Zaire
- Martha Tshisekedi, Zairian, Zaire

MARCH 11, 1988, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., \$15

Student rate \$5; group rates available
The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
The Roof Room, 8th Floor Conference Center
11 DuPont Circle, Washington, DC

CO-SPONSORS
 Association of Concerned Africa Scholars (Endorser) • Black Community Information Center Boston • Bread for the World (Endorser) • Center for Research on Zaire (CEREZ) • Community for Human Rights • Lutheran Advocates for Social Change • Peoples Revolutionary Party (Congo) • The Rain-

bow Lobby • Phil Terry, co-chair Anti-Apartheid Coalition, Occidental College, Los Angeles • Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), Zaire • U.S. Congo Friendship Committee • Women's Strike for Peace • Workers and Peasants Party of the Congo (P.O.P.) • Zairian Clergy for the Restoration of Justice and Democracy

organizational affiliation for identification purposes only

For more information and to arrange for literature display, contact (212) 864-3000 (New York); (202) 543-8324 (Wash., D.C.)

TO REGISTER

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

ORGANIZATION/AFFILIATION

Make checks payable to
 U.S.-Congo Friendship Committee,

216 West 102 Street, Suite 2C,
 New York, NY 10025

Enclosed is my check or money
 order for \$15.

Europe remains discreet about Occupied Territories

TWO MONTHS AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF revolt in the Gaza Strip, European Community foreign ministers issued a statement "deeply deploring the repressive measures taken by Israel." The measures "are in violation of international law and human rights," the European foreign ministers agreed, and "must stop."

Few and far between, such statements of condemnation are mild compared to the deep and silent European revulsion at reports of soliders dragging teen-agers from their beds to break their hands with rifle butts, or smash their heads. Protests are not louder because Europeans have learned that Israel does not take criticism well. Individual governments prefer to remain discreet, and take a stand through the European Community, rather than court accusations of anti-Semitism. Anyway, it is the U.S. that supports Israel, right or wrong. Woody Allen's recent condemnation of Israel's actions that appeared in the *New York Times* is more important than that of all the European heads of state put together.

The silence may be more ominous for Israel than open criticism, usually left to Jews, who are considered the only ones who can get away with saying anything.

The silence often expresses not indifference, but hopelessness. Something like this—and the worse that's yet to come—was bound to happen. Foreseeing the inevitable is precisely what led some people to keep saying that Israel must negotiate a two-state solution with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

It is too late for warnings: What matters now is the chance that a solution is still possible, that Israel and the Palestinians can still be saved from mutual destruction. The important point is that Israel does have a choice. This is what most Israelis have not yet realized.

Back from a trip to the Occupied Territories as part of a delegation sent by the West German Green party, labor leader Jakob Moneta called the Occupied Territories a hell on earth. Moneta, a retired editor for publications of the metalworkers union IG Metall, is Jewish.

"If there is a hell somewhere," he wrote in a guest editorial for *Die Tageszeitung*, "it must be like what we saw in the Gaza camps. It's not so much a matter of the misery as of the arbitrary and brutal havoc wrought by the Israeli army."

"It is untrue," stressed Moneta, "that nobody will negotiate with Israel, but this government is doing everything so as not to be forced to meet Palestinian concessions with compromises of its own." Likud, Israel's conservative party, sees a "mortal danger" in withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and an international conference.

But Moneta disagrees. "The real danger for the Israelis today comes from those who clamor for annexation and are not ready for any compromise. There would be neither victors nor vanquished left from a new 'Masada.' Both sides would destroy each other like two scorpions in a bottle. But neither that wondrously beautiful land nor the people who live there deserve such a fate."

Italy's lead: Of major European countries, Italy has taken the lead in trying to promote an international peace conference, on both the diplomatic and popular levels. Italians have very quickly moved beyond heartfelt expressions of dismay to constructive proposals.

Italy's major political forces—the Christian Democratic Party, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Green party, the Proletarian Democracy party, all three major labor confederations and other peace and youth organizations—all joined in organizing a mass demonstration in Rome on February 13, demanding an international peace conference under United Nations auspices.

Already on January 30 a demonstration organized only by the small leftist party Proletarian Democracy had drawn more than 20,000 Romans who supported "life, land and home country for the Palestinians." To make clear what they wanted, the demonstrators had carried a giant model of a TV set through the streets with a picture painted on the screen of an international peace conference bringing the U.S., the Soviet Union, Israel and the PLO together around a table.

The Italians are doing what they can to help Israeli and Palestinian friends willing to talk peace get around the vicious anti-peace-talk law passed by the Knesset in August 1986. Under the law, any citizen or resident of Israel can be sentenced to three years in prison for "knowingly and without lawful authority, making contact, in Israel or abroad, with a person who is a member of the executive, the council or any such body of a terrorist organization, or who is an official representative of a terrorist organization." The term "terrorist organization" is of course the official Israeli term for the PLO, the umbrella organization recognized by more than 90 percent of the Palestinian people as the only representation they are able to give themselves in their stateless situation.

In a notable evolution of political culture, Proletarian Democracy at its last congress fully abandoned the traditional struggle mode of proletarian movement politics in favor of "non-violence for a non-violent society," thereby joining up with certain pacifist and left Catholic currents. Democrazia Proletaria leader Mario Capanna joined several Palestinian students, peace activists and banished Jerusalem Archbishop Hilarion Capucci in fasting to express solidarity with Palestinian victims of repression in the Occupied Territories.

At the January 30 rally, speakers at the Piazza Navona included Capanna, Nemer Hammad of the PLO and leading Israeli champion of dialogue with "the enemy" Uri Avnery.

As some stray out-of-town demonstrators returned to their buses after the rally, they were attacked and beaten by a group of about 100 young "defenders" of Rome's "Jewish community," which issued a communique claiming the right to build its own defense forces against "anti-Semitism."

Meanwhile, the Italian Communist Party hosted Palestinian Catholic editor Hanna Siniora at meetings in Turin and Milan. As editor of the weekly *Al Fajr* and its English language edition *The Dawn*, Siniora has important American support and is considered a leading potential representative of the Palestinians at peace talks the U.S. might force on Israel.

Between trips to the U.S., Siniora told the Italians that "93 percent of the Palestinians who live in the occupied territories identify with the platform of the PLO. Arafat remains

the key to any negotiation. It is unthinkable to keep him out."

"The Palestinian struggle in this period," Siniora told a Milan gathering, "has created a new situation, a new opportunity that if exploited can make it possible to end the violent chapter in the history of our two peoples. The Palestinians with their struggle are showing that they do not want the destruction of the state of Israel but the end of its imperial rule."

The French disconnection: In France, the events in the Mideast have not shaken the prevailing political apathy. Demonstrations have been small. The old ambition of France to play a role no longer seems to be

MIDEAST

taken seriously. Moderate Arab leaders like Jordan's King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak have found a comforting welcome in Paris after their disappointments in Washington. Hussein earned a particularly warm welcome from Prime Minister Jacques Chirac by agreeing to purchase a score of Mirage 2000 jets, the first sale Dassault has made in two years.

The French Socialist Party is traditionally the most pro-Israeli of the French political parties. Back in the '50s Shimon Peres, as military attache at the Israeli Embassy, made many Socialist friends and persuaded the French government secretly to help Israel build nuclear weapons. Now President Francois Mitterrand's closest aide, Jacques Attali, has restored close working relations with Peres, Israel's foreign minister and Labor Party leader.

On January 8 party Secretary Lionel Jospin issued a statement saying that: "Israel is our friend; we must tell her the truth! No Socialist can accept what is being done in her name in the West Bank and in Gaza." But Jospin was weak in offering proposals, other than to note that his friend Peres was "quite alone in proposing a negotiated solution..."

In the French Jewish population, a sharp cleavage is visible between intellectuals and the "Jewish community," religious Jews who have often immigrated from former French colonies in North Africa. The less-sophisticated "community" Jews have been indoctrinated to believe that the world wants to destroy Israel.

On January 20 a group of Jewish intellectuals delivered a petition to the Israeli Embassy in Paris calling for "a negotiation process leading to evacuation of the territories occupied since 1967, with respect for the right to self-determination and freedoms of both peoples." The petition was signed by 212 intellectuals, including many familiar names of the French left who have been in the forefront of the defense of human rights over the years.

Their appeal enraged the Federation of Zionist Organizations of France, which declared its "unconditional support to the government of the State of Israel."

Zionist gangs physically attacked the intellectuals who presented the human rights petition to the Israeli Embassy. This marked a further step in the deepening split between the prestigious Jewish intelligentsia of France and a new generation of religious,

Zionist Jews, who seem to belong to a different world.

Lionel Stoléru, president of the Franco-Israeli chamber of commerce, called the criticism of Israel "primitive anti-Semitism" and declared that "the Jewish community will not let the state of Israel's image be sullied by scandalous propaganda."

Communities in crisis: What differs from the U.S. is that the emotionally tightly knit Jewish "community" is more than balanced in France by Arab communities. Jewish and Moslem communities exist side by side peacefully in sections like Belleville. But this could change. A demonstration for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations drew only a couple of thousand leftist militants to the Place de la République in Paris. But a few days later, almost as many North Africans could be seen gathered on the same spot listening reverently as an Islamic preacher delivered an impassioned sermon in Arabic on behalf of the Palestinian martyrs.

Unlike the U.S., Europe is only a stone's throw from the Middle East—which from the European perspective is indeed the "Near" East. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict resounds in Europe in dangerous ways. If the PLO, essentially belonging to the tradition of laic, rationalist politics, loses influence to Islamic fundamentalism, Israel's unconditional supporters can hope that Europe may identify with Israel against the threat of "Islamic hordes."

Strategic analyst Pierre Lellouche is already making the identification. In a January column in the *International Herald Tribune* Lellouche complained: "The key demographic lesson of the Israel-Palestinian war is largely lost on most Western democracies, notably in Europe, where the usual flurry of self-righteous condemnations of Israeli 'repression' makes up for the lack of viable solutions."

Lellouche feels no need to fill that lack. Instead, he draws the scary lesson that "the demographic pressure of which we see a version in Israel is slowly altering the political, economic and security future of many affluent 'white' nations in the developed world."

This outrageous "lesson" suggests that the Palestinians living in their native lands conquered by Israel in 1967 are somehow invading Israel with their "demographic pressure," while in fact they are merely demanding ordinary rights and freedoms in the land of their birth. But the vague fears aroused may succeed in convincing some part of the European population that brutality is necessary self-defense. One can also speculate on how Lellouche sees the Palestinians as less "white" than Israelis. Could it be that Zionism really can turn into a form of racism?

Loving the "other": Jacobo Timerman, the courageous Argentinian Jewish editor who was tortured by the Argentine military dictatorship, recalled in a recent column in the Spanish daily *El Pais* that after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited Jerusalem in the late '70s, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote to his Israeli friends that "now that you have been recognized by the 'other,' you cannot avoid recognizing him in turn."

"Elitism is finished," concluded Timerman. "It won't be us, we democratic and progressive Jews, who give independence to the Palestinians. They will conquer it for themselves. What we can do, maybe the only thing, is to demonstrate our solidarity, our respect, wish them well and denounce the hypocrites. As Sartre wanted, the time has come to love the other, the Palestinian." □

Inside the Animal Factory



By Jim Naureckas

THIS IS THE STORY OF A GEORGIA TOYMAKER who says he stumbled into a world of secret arms sales and covert warfare, where small businessmen rubbed elbows with retired generals. From an office in an Atlanta suburb, he claims to have witnessed the inner workings of a network that stretched from Laos to Switzerland, from Iran to Nicaragua.

The toymaker, Robert Fletcher, has been telling his story to government investigators since early 1986, long before the things he was talking about became front-page news. Eventually, he contacted the Christic Institute, a religious-left, non-profit legal group that is suing leaders of the contra network for criminal conspiracy. The following account of Fletcher's story is based on a deposition given by Fletcher last November, which was recently released by the Christic Institute.

"Contact us": The story begins in late 1984 at the Animal Factory, Fletcher's small company in Marietta, Georgia, that made animal puppets. "In 1984 we had just expanded to being reasonably operative, as opposed to just functioning in my basement," he told the Christic Institute.

One day Fletcher received what would soon prove a fateful message. Written on the back of a business card someone had handed him at a New York marketing convention were the words, "Contact us after the show."

At first Fletcher paid no attention to the invitation. But several weeks later he noticed, to his surprise, that the address on the card was in his own building complex. In fact, he had watched his neighbors move in a month or two earlier.

When he stopped by in February 1985, the business card's author introduced himself as Gary Best. He explained that his business, Vista Distribution USA, sold watches to convenience stores. "Their furnishings were extremely expensive," Fletcher recalled.

Soon Vista made an offer to buy out Fletcher's Animal Factory. He agreed after Best promised to pay off Fletcher's debts and advertise the puppets. Fletcher was put on salary and the toy company became Vista Animal Factory USA.

"Immediately, there were things that struck me as being unusual," Fletcher later testified. For one thing, no one seemed to care that thousands of dollars worth of unsold watches were being returned. "The boxes were coming in and just being piled up in the back of the offices," Fletcher says.

Furthermore, the office Telex machine kept printing inexplicable messages about shipments of "potatoes" and "fireworks"

from such places as Switzerland, Hong Kong and Pakistan.

His new partner, Gary Best, began to worry him as well. Best, who liked to carry around a three-inch stack of credit cards bound together with a rubber band, took unexplained overseas trips with company money. Since Fletcher couldn't figure out where that money was coming from, he decided to confront Best.

"I just asked him directly where he made all his money," Fletcher testified. "Without hesitating at all Gary Best told me that he sold armament."

"I asked him what he meant by armament. And he said, 'Well, things including military aircraft, helicopters, things of that sort.'"

"Upon looking at my surprised look on my face, he immediately followed it up by saying, 'But I do it all legally.'"

After that, Best shared more and more of his secrets with Fletcher. Fletcher was warned, however, to keep what he was told to himself. "Now, if you ever say anything about any of this," Fletcher said he was once told, as Best pulled the trigger of an imaginary gun. "Just so you understand," Best reportedly said.

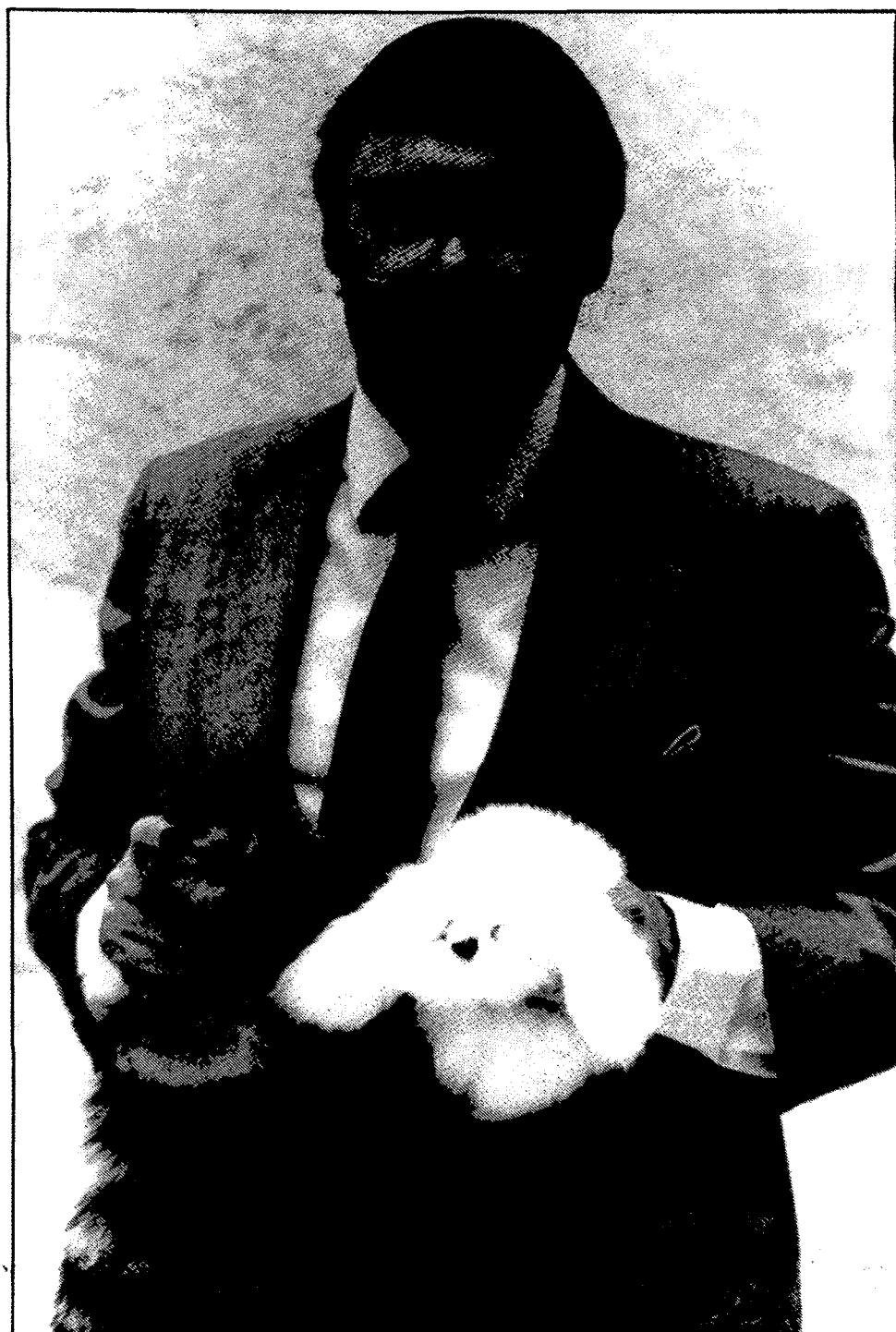
Teasing the generals: If Vista was an arms company it would explain a great deal of Fletcher's story—for instance, the presence of a retired U.S. general, Harry "Heine" Aderholt, who Fletcher said frequently visited the office and was in constant touch with Best by phone.

Aderholt is a big name in covert action circles, having commanded the air wing of the Special Operations Group in Vietnam. In the '60s that unit ran the CIA's Air America, which air-dropped arms—and, many sources allege, flew out opium—for the U.S. government's "secret war" in Laos (see *In These Times*, April 15, 1987). Many of his subordinates, including Richard Secord and Eugene Hasenfus, were later part of Oliver North's contra resupply operation.

According to Fletcher, Vista was involved in a cause that Aderholt has long been active in: the search for live MIA's in Southeast Asia. At the beginning of 1985, Fletcher said, Best was "very involved with insurgency activities and with going behind the lines in Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and that area in search of prisoners of war and missing-in-action soldiers."

"[Best's] men were going back and going in and trying to find these guys and bring them out," Fletcher said Best told him. Vista money was reportedly even going to bribe Southeast Asian officials.

The Vietnam connection led Fletcher to ask if Best had been in Vietnam. "Well, yes I was, but not in uniform," was Best's reply.



Robert Fletcher: "No way would I be some kind of James Bond courier."

Besides Aderholt, another, more famous military man had ties to Vista: Gen. John Singlaub, a military intelligence veteran active in the contra "private aid" network.

Singlaub came to the Vista office on at least one occasion, according to Fletcher. In fact, Fletcher recalled entertaining Singlaub and Aderholt with one of his puppets. "I...teased about the two of them being generals with this little raccoon toy," he said.

Fletcher reported that after the puppet show, Singlaub met privately with Best. Then Best came beaming into Fletcher's office and told him: "General Singlaub is with us now."

Singlaub called the office frequently after that, according to the deposition. "There was a real regular communication there," Fletcher said. But when the joint Iran-contra committee put Singlaub under oath, he seemed to have forgotten all about it.

"General, are you familiar with a firm called Vista Distribution or Vista Distributors, in Marietta, Georgia?" he was asked by Rep. Thomas Foley (D-WA).

"No," Singlaub answered.

According to Fletcher, Vista employees subsequently asked Best about Singlaub's answer. (By the time, Fletcher had left the firm.) "Gary's response to that was, kind of in a smirking manner, that maybe the question wasn't asked quite right; and, you know, if the question wasn't asked right, then maybe they didn't get the right answer," Fletcher said the employees told him.

Singlaub's lawyer told *In These Times* that Singlaub did know Gary Best, but had

not recognized the company's name during the committee hearing.

Iran-contra business: According to Fletcher, the Nicaraguan contra rebels were an important sideline at Vista in 1985, when federal contra support was illegal. Fletcher, who was on a first-name basis with Aderholt, said the general related anecdotes to him about "his boys" in Nicaragua. "The implication [was that Aderholt and Best] were involved in some type of a revolutionary activity of a military type in Nicaragua," Fletcher said in his deposition. "At that time, I had absolutely no idea what a contra was or a Sandinista."

Fletcher said that one of his friends was even persuaded to trade his old, broken-down van for a new one owned by Vista. The old van was allegedly then shipped to Nicaragua, where, as Aderholt told Fletcher, its beat-up condition would allow it to be used without attracting attention.

Fletcher said he later learned that in mid-1986, Vista's American Express account paid for a round-trip ticket to Managua for Bill Kenny, a man who Fletcher said was in frequent contact with Vista. What Fletcher didn't know when he gave the deposition was that Kenny appears in documents unearthed by the Iran-contra committee.

In a March 1986 memo to Oliver North, Robert Owen, North's right-hand man, said Kenny "now works with Singlaub and Heine Aderholt." Owen wrote that Kenny "seems upfront and able to keep his mouth

shut" and recommended him for a proposed contra operation, the details of which were deleted by the Iran-contra committee.

Fletcher also alleged in the deposition that Vista was involved with Iran arms sales. According to the deposition, Best attempted to open a channel to Iran through one of Fletcher's contacts, an oil businessman named Raj Mallick. Best was "trying to locate aircraft replacement parts and also potentially a couple of large aircraft" for sale to Iran, Fletcher said. He said Best was trying to get the equipment in May or June 1985, two or three months before the White House approved Israel's airplane-parts-for-hostages deal with Iran.

Fletcher was disturbed by the idea of selling parts to Iran. "I can't believe that you're talking about selling...military aircraft parts to Iran," he testified that he told Best.

"As far as I'm concerned, these are commercial aircraft parts that we're sending over there, and that's legal," Best allegedly replied.

Mallick once located a "potential representative of Iran," Fletcher testified, but the sales apparently never materialized. Mallick told *In These Times* that he had discussed a sale of airplane parts with Best, and that "he may have mentioned Iran," but Mallick denied ever being in contact with Iranian representatives.

"No way in a million years": Fletcher said he was eventually asked to work actively on the covert side of Vista's operations. Fletcher recounted having the following conversation with Best in a parking lot in September, 1985:

"Would you be interested in making some extra money on the side?" Best opened.

"Sure," said Fletcher.

"Well—you get along with blacks fairly well."

"Sure."

"Could you handle yourself with people like at a diplomatic level?" Best asked.

"Sure."

"Well, we're going to start doing quite a bit of business in Angola," said Best. (Covert action against the Angolan government became legal in August 1985.) "We would pay you \$2,000 to just make flights over, meet with certain people, take information to them or bring information back from those people... You might want to pick up a toy and make it look like you're buying toys over there or something."

But there was a catch to the offer. Fletcher said Best told him, "If you talk to the wrong people, you will be killed."

Given the earlier pantomimed gunshot, Fletcher took this as an implied threat. So despite the fact that he immediately decided to reject Best's proposal—"There's no way in a million years I would fly into Angola and function as some kind of a James Bond courier," Fletcher said later—he stalled for time by agreeing to Best's demand that he get a passport.

By this time, fall 1985, Fletcher was looking for a way to get his toy company back. Rather than putting money into the Animal Factory as Best had promised, he was reportedly diverting toy profits to the covert operations. "By this time, I had realized that...for all intents and purposes, the watch business and my toy company were being used strictly as...a front for all these other activities," Fletcher testified.

When Fletcher confronted Best about the problems, around December 1, 1985,

Was a Georgia toy company really a CIA puppet?

Gary Best: a friend to generals

both men knew things couldn't continue. "He ordered me to get my personal belongings and leave, which I did," Fletcher said. While Best retained control of the business, Fletcher moved to Florida, where he now sells recreational vehicles. In the deposition, he estimated that his partnership with Best had cost him at least \$100,000. "What amounted to a growing five-year success story was down the drain," Fletcher said.

"A pack of lies": Some witnesses dispute much of Fletcher's story. Gary Best, for example, the man who knows the most about Vista, vehemently denied most of Fletcher's allegations.

When asked to comment on Fletcher's deposition, Best replied, "I haven't read it but I hear it's just a pack of lies." The court reporter who prepared the deposition, however, said Best had picked up a copy almost as soon as it was finished. In any case, Best seemed very familiar with the deposition's charges.

Best denied that Vista was involved with arms sales, the contras or Angola. He also denied ever threatening Fletcher. He said that his connections with Singlaub and Aderholt were "humanitarian," although they may have been conducted "in a business manner." He declined to comment on whether Vista was involved in the MIA issue.

Best said that a van had been shipped to Guatemala, not Nicaragua, and it was used for medical relief. He claimed that he had broken off a deal with oil businessman Mallick because he suspected Mallick might be looking for parts for Iran.

Likewise, a spokeswoman for Singlaub said the general might have been supportive of whatever Vista was doing, but said, "Gen. Singlaub is not involved with anybody in arms sales."

Aderholt refused to answer *In These Times'* questions, saying, "Some of us guys are fed up with you bastards."

But other former Vista employees corroborated much of Fletcher's story, though they asked not to be quoted. And the story contains elements—most notably the 1985 Iran arms sales—that seem impossible for Fletcher to have made up in early 1986, when he first started talking to investigators.

If Fletcher's story is true, it raises several questions. Was Gary Best working for the U.S. government? Best said that he wasn't, although Fletcher and the Christic Institute said they believe that Best worked for the CIA.

More important, if the charges about Vista could stay in the shadows for so long, what else remains concealed? Fletcher paints a picture of a U.S. citizen's business being destroyed, of covert operations being run out of a suburban business office. With a little more care and a little more discretion, similar operations may still be going on today. □



EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
 Managing Editor: Sheryl Larson
 Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide, John B. Judis, David Moberg
 Assistant Managing Editor: Miles Harvey
 Culture Editor: Jeff Reid
 Associate Editor: Salim Muwakkil
 European Editor: Diana Johnstone
 In Short Editor: Joel Bleifuss (on leave)
 Copy Editor: Frieda Gordon Landau
 Staff Writer: Jim Naureckas
 Editorial Promotions: Maggie Garb
 Researchers: Joan McGrath, Lynn Travers
 Intern: John Krzyskowski
 California correspondent: Kathryn Phillips

Art Director: Miles DeCoster
 Associate Art Director: Peter Hannan
 Assistant Art Director: Lisa Weinstein
 Photo Editor: Paul Comstock
 Typesetter: Jim Rinnert
 Intern: Glenora Croucher

Publisher: James Weinstein
 Assistant Publisher: Carol E.A. Gams
 Co-Business Managers:
 Louis Hirsch, Finance
 Donna Thomas, Data Processing Accounting
 Hania Richmond, Office Personnel
 Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey
 Assistant Advertising Director: Hania Richmond
 Receptionist: Theresa Nutall

Circulation Director: Chris D'Arpa
 Assistant Director: George Gorham

Concert Typographers: Sheryl Hybert

In These Times believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

ISSN 0160-5992

Published 41 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June through the first week in September by Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 472-5700

Member: Alternative Press Syndicate

The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1988 by Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in the Alternative Press Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 1300 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL 60657. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$47.95 outside the U.S. and its possessions). Advertising rates sent on request. Back issues \$3; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs. Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

This issue (Vol. 12, No. 13) published Feb. 17, 1988, for newsstand sales Feb. 17-Feb. 23, 1988.



Middle East disappears in presidential debates

With the Democratic presidential contenders busily discussing major and minor issues, there is one of great importance they are studiously avoiding: the Middle East, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And yet major politicians—and American administrations since the end of World War II—have all agreed that the Middle East is an area of vital concern to the United States. This is reflected in the fact that in the past 10 years, more than two-thirds of all U.S. foreign aid—some \$50 billion—has gone to the Middle East, and that more than 90 percent of that has been Israeli or Camp David-related.

In recent weeks the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has broken out in a startling new form, as the entire population of the West Bank and Gaza has demonstrated against continued Israeli occupation of the land taken in the 1967 war. Among other things, this has forced many people to recognize what has always been true, that for virtually all Palestinians, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is seen as their only true representative. And it has made inescapable what was obvious all along: this conflict cannot be covered over or "managed" within the shared assumptions of Israel and the United States.

And yet, with the exception of Jesse Jackson, who consistently has called for recognition of the Palestinians' right to independent statehood, along with Israel's right to security within internationally recognized borders, all the Democratic candidates have been looking the other way. While studiously avoiding confrontation with this situation, however, they have in varying degrees all lined up in uncritical support of Israeli policy. And to a man, they continue to denounce the PLO as a terrorist organization, not to be seen with in polite company.

The Middle East records of these candidates have been—and continue to be—miserable. Dove or hawk, old-fashioned Democrat or neo-liberal, each acts as if in thrall to the Israel lobby. Sen. Paul Simon, who one might expect to be among the more sympathetic to the Palestinians, is now among the most extreme supporters of cur-

rent Israeli policies, though it wasn't always so. In 1982 he wrote that we "should be willing to talk to the PLO," even while continuing to honor Henry Kissinger's pledge not to enter formal negotiations with it. "There will be no permanent settlement of the Middle East situation until the Palestinian question is resolved," he acknowledged, "and, rightly or wrongly, the Palestinians regard the PLO as their voice."

But in his successful senatorial campaign against Charles Percy in 1984, Simon depended heavily on Jewish support—one California man spent a million dollars statewide for billboards denouncing Percy, who was seen as pro-Arab, and in Simon's very narrow victory the Jewish vote was decisive. So last November Simon became one of the sponsors of legislation to close the PLO mission to the U.N. and the Palestinian Information Office in Washington. Even the State Department has believed that closing the U.N. mission, set up in 1974 following a resolution that accepted the group as the representative of the Palestinian people, violates international law. And the American Civil Liberties Union has denounced the closing of the Washington information office as "a gross violation of the rights of Americans to associate with foreign political movements and to advocate their views in the U.S."

The other leading Democratic candidates have similar records. Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-MO) did oppose a cut-off of aid to Syria in 1980 and also voted at that time against moving the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem—which is disputed territory. But since then Gephardt has been consistently hostile to the Palestinians. Last July he played on the terrorist mania then still being played up in the media. "No foreign terrorist group, including the PLO," he wrote, "should be given legal sanction or protection in the United States." Gov. Michael Dukakis takes a similar position, as do both former Gov. Bruce Babbitt and Sen. Albert Gore (D-TN).

Yet since the latest Palestinian demonstrations, and the Israeli policy of brutal suppression, popular opinion in the U.S. has begun to change, among both Jews and non-Jews. An opportunity now exists to take another look at American Middle East policy. This is certainly an issue worthy of serious discussion by presidential candidates. To initiate the discussion may involve some political risks. But a person of sufficient stature to become president should also be one willing to take a political risk now and then, especially on such a crucial issue.

LETTERS

Inadvertent confirmation

I AM ASTONISHED BY THE VITUPERATIVE ATTACKS ON John Judis' DSA article (*ITT*, Jan. 13). The intolerance they display toward opinion that diverges from their own is appalling. They inadvertently confirm the analysis that Judis made in his story: that some DSA members haven't any idea what "democracy" or "socialism" mean. They act like they have a copyright on the words and can therefore censure anyone who infringes on their purchase. I'm glad it isn't so. I thought this kind of party-line mentality went out with digit dialing.

As for the substance of the debate, I thought Judis' remarks on socialism and democracy, on Nicaragua and Jesse Jackson were intelligent, reasoned and also unremarkable. It is obvious, I think, that DSA has boxed itself into a sectarian cul de sac.

Robert Schaeffer
Senior Editor, *Nuclear Times*
Former Managing Editor, *In These Times*
Washington

Offended

I HAVE GIVEN ABOUT 15 SUBSCRIPTIONS TO *IN THESE Times* away in the last five years. I have given *ITT* to family and friends because I wanted to expose them to high quality journalism from a democratic socialist perspective, and by doing so, help them understand why I have spent so much time and resources as an activist of the Democratic Socialists of America. Though DSA is the only expression in America of the politics of *In These Times*, you mention us about twice a year, and this has not been a problem for me. I recognized that the things that you were reporting on were events of much greater import than DSA chapters' educational or electoral projects.

But now you have really offended me. I was very angry to read John Judis' article, which was both untrue and politically "incorrect," but I was willing to dismiss his attack as the cost to be paid for having a truly democratic paper. Many times I have thought to write in defense of Alex Amerisov and his revelations about the growth of a democratic left in the Soviet Union, but you were adamant in your defense of his right to appear and so I never felt called upon to demand that you remain pluralistic, much less to demand that you become less so. But the editorial attacking DSA's endorsement of Jesse Jackson is truly indefensible.

You lie about the amount of opposition in DSA to Jackson's endorsement, which is minuscule, though quite vocal and apparently well connected to *ITT* and the *New York Times*. You insist on reiterating the assertions about Jackson's anti-Semitism as if we had not given careful consideration to the import of his comments and his sincere attempts to apologize. If you ever read our endorsement it says explicitly that we recognize that Jackson is not a socialist. You insist that endorsement of Jackson puts us outside the mainstream, spewing the Democratic Leadership Council line that says that the 95 percent of blacks and the 20 percent of the white Democrats supporting Jackson are not a "real" constituency.

Then, in the very same issue, you go ahead and trash Simon and Gephardt, and I assume you aren't endorsing Dukakis, so what you are really saying to us is "this year socialists should get close to the mainstream, but not to any of the presidential candidates." Excuse us, but we couldn't figure out how to do that, and decided to work with the most progressive Democratic candidate for president.

If you think you are trying to build a space for democratic socialism in this country, why are you so irresponsibly trashing the only organization that's actually working toward that goal?

J. Hughes
Sec., Univ. of Chicago DSA
Chicago, Illinois

Editor's note: With all due respect to J. Hughes, disagreeing with DSA's endorsement of Jesse Jackson is not "trashing" DSA. It is merely disagreeing. It is strange that "democratic" socialists can consider reasoned criticism an attack. In fact, it is a sincere form of praise. One doesn't bother to criticize those considered insignificant. As to which Democratic candidate should be endorsed, it seems to us the time to endorse—that is, commit an organization like DSA—is after the Democratic candidate has been chosen. Before that, locals and individuals should do as they see fit. But that's only our opinion.

Low esteem

IN *THESE TIMES* RECENTLY ADDED FLUFF to the fray over "democracy" in Nicaragua (*ITT*, Jan. 27). Unfortunately, *ITT* based its contribution on the mistaken belief that the United States—albeit "it has a long way to go"—is "democratic." With "most Americans," *ITT* seems to believe that democracy is good, that the United States is a democracy, and therefore, the United States is good.

If the United States were a democracy as *ITT* claims and if "few Americans believe [they] have a right to impose [their] will on others" as *ITT* claims, there would be no debate about U.S. intervention in Nicaragua at all. There would not be any intervention at all. What "few Americans believe" would not be U.S. foreign policy.

But the United States is not a democracy, rather an authoritarian plutocracy with forms of mass legitimation such as elections and television. Thus *ITT* should not have cautioned American liberals and leftists about judging Nicaragua by America's

standard of "democracy." Instead, *ITT* should have criticized those who hold the U.S. political system in high esteem. The problem is neither that Nicaragua is not as "democratic" as the U.S., nor that Nicaragua could be more "democratic." The problem is that the United States wars on Nicaragua.

Eric Schnauffer
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Editor's note: Eric Schnauffer has provided a vivid illustration of why the American left is in such bad shape. First, the point of the editorial was precisely that the problem is the Reagan administration's war on Nicaragua. "The purpose of a political organization," we wrote, "is to seek the widest areas of agreement on principles consistent with its own. In the case of Nicaragua this means agreement that it is Nicaragua's business what kind of government it wants," and that "we have no right to impose our ideas of what's good for Nicaragua."

But anyone who thinks the United States is not a democracy is living in a dream world—or has a definition of democracy so abstract and absolute as to be meaningless. Yes, we are ruled by a corporate oligarchy that manipulates public opinion and attitudes through its control of the media, the educational system and other institutions. But if this were a command state it would not need to do so, it would simply outlaw any opinion contrary to the official government view. Under our constitutional system the population must be persuaded. Consent must be manufactured, and that is not always possible, as both the war in Vietnam and the contra war have illustrated. Our representatives represent us poorly, but they do have to be re-elected and therefore cannot totally ignore public opinion, even when it fails to conform to the official line of government and media.

In other words, we have a political process in which social forces contend within a constitutional framework that is formally democratic. A left that understood our system and its historical evolution, and that could develop a program embodying its principles and in tune with those of the American people might actually be able to contest for power. Schnauffer's view excludes that possibility without providing an alternative.

False premises

YOUR EDITORIAL (*ITT*, JAN. 27) DISCUSSES "whether or not—and in what sense—Nicaragua is democratic." I presume this is to explain the country's lack of "a high level

of democracy."

You give Nicaragua high marks on all standards discussed, except background and environment. You seem to imply that because Americans are educated, well fed, and used to personal freedom and mobility, this somehow makes our voters more democratic. This sounds like an argument to convince that a republic which disenfranchises the poor is superior to a pure democracy. I submit the intelligence of the voters is more important than the degree of their education. Considering the results of the most recent American and Nicaraguan elections for president the Nicaraguans win hands down for intelligence. The contents of your stomach has even less to do with your ability to vote than do the contents of your head. Individualism vs. community is important, but any socialist worth his salt ought to know the answer to that one. Then there is your opinion that, "adopting a position can only alienate those who disagree" and, "those upholding...Nicaragua's democracy are in a small minority." I would remind that much of the civil rights we Americans enjoy today were won by a small minority who waved their banners and did not worry about alienating those who disagreed.

I am not, nor ever have been, a member of DSA. My transition from Iowa Republicanism to an understanding and belief in socialism has been long and gradual. I do believe, however, it is important for political organizations to endorse political figures, so what's wrong with DSA endorsing Jesse Jackson? Has DSA, or *ITT* for that matter, any other choice? I intend to vote for the Rev. Jackson even though I am sure Jesse at times has privately been derisive of "Honkyville."

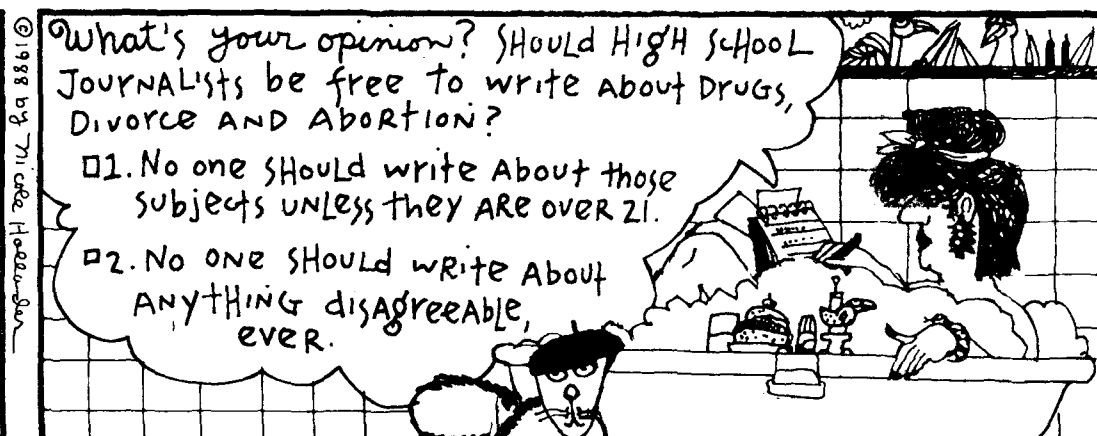
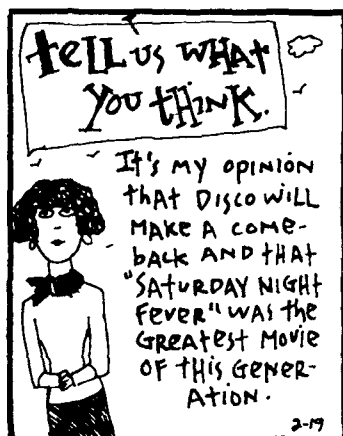
Ray E. Ingram
Baton Rouge, La.

Editor's note: Ray Ingram misses our point on Nicaragua. It is not a matter of who is more or less democratic, but that democracy means different things in different places and times. Our standard of democracy means little or nothing to most Nicaraguans. Theirs means little to the majority of Americans.

Correction

In These Times reported in its February 3 edition that French politician Pierre Juquin proposed "construction of a strictly non-military observation satellite to verify disarmament agreements in cooperation with the U.S...." The sentence should have read "...in cooperation with the U.N...."

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

Why we should support Jesse Jackson

By Jeff Alson

FOR THOSE WHO STRIVE FOR PEACE AND justice, the greatest outcome of the 1988 electoral process would be for Jesse Jackson to shock the professional political pundits and win the presidency. The next best result would be for Jackson to run a strong and aggressive national campaign—and lose.

That progressives have not closed ranks behind the Jackson campaign is astonishing to those of us who have done so. For he is the first serious national presidential candidate in decades to profess truly progressive principles: large military cuts, progressive taxes, new programs such as national health and childcare, and a foreign policy based on moral and economic strength instead of military might. Jackson's entire life has been devoted to empowering people; and indeed his politics have evolved out of that process. Yet, many on the left have not endorsed the Jackson campaign.

It is apparent that the primary reason why many progressives remain ambivalent toward Jackson's candidacy is the perception that he cannot win. There are strong arguments both for and against this thesis. Of course, if enough people fail to support Jackson because they believe he cannot win, that will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But whether Jackson can win may not be all that important, for enormous

benefits could accrue even from a strong but losing Jackson campaign.

Winning the war: The Jackson candidacy is the electoral manifestation of an ongoing movement for peace, justice and equality. Most political campaigns are unidirectional—they sap energy and resources from groups that stand to gain if the candidate gets elected, but they do little to replenish the effectiveness of those groups. But in this case there is a symbiosis between the Jackson campaign and the ongoing movement. When hundreds of thousands march in Washington on Central America or South Africa or for jobs or against AIDS, and Jackson speaks, he accepts the political demands of the marchers and becomes accountable to them.

Probably the most significant and lasting impact of the Jackson campaign is the hope that it gives those who have been living the American nightmare, particularly young and poor blacks who most readily identify with Jackson. As the late novelist James Baldwin put it, "Nothing will ever again be what it was before. It changes the way the boy in the street and the boy on death row and his mother and father and his sweetheart and his sister think about themselves. It indicates that one is not entirely at the mercy of the assumptions of this republic, to what they have said you are."

Getting the people Jackson refers to as



Bill Stamets

"the damned, the despised and the dispossessed" involved must be one key to increasing the likelihood of real social change. Jackson was partially responsible for 2 million new black registrations (1.2 million in the South) in 1984 and we can expect continued progress this year, with other non-voters responding to his message.

This expansion of the Democratic electoral base has already brought some important victories. Critical to regaining control

white voters. Blacks, who comprise 20 or more percent of the vote in each of these states, turned out in higher numbers partially as a result of Jackson's efforts. The clearest impact was the rejection of Robert Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court.

Jackson's issues-oriented campaign also is having a direct political impact. The media attention is permitting him to introduce ideas about economic justice and a moral foreign policy to tens of millions of Americans. In this way the campaign helps to extend the scope of political debate in this country, laying the foundation for left victories on specific issues in the future.

A strong Jackson presence at the Democratic convention with, say, 20 percent of the overall delegates, will permit him and his supporters to influence the party. Of course, in a divided convention his support could be essential in choosing the presidential nominee. At minimum, Jackson will influence the selection of the vice president, the platform, and the myriad party leadership positions.

As the first non-white male to become a serious candidate, Jackson is breaking down a multitude of institutional barriers that will make it easier for others that follow. By establishing himself and the movement on the left of the party spectrum, he plants important seeds as well. In a two-party system an ideological movement must be nurtured over time.

A lesson from the right: In 1964, Barry Goldwater's landslide loss was considered to be the death knell of the Republican right. Instead, it laid the foundation for the right to build upon, culminating in victories in 1980 and 1984 by a man who a mere decade earlier was thought to be far too extreme to be taken seriously as a national candidate. Jackson's candidacy may have equally historic importance.

Electoral politics are inherently problematic for some on the American left. Both our political system's institutional structures and the nature of economic and political control promote a process that leaves progressives bound by "lessers of evil-ism" and accommodation with the center. But history has presented us with an opportunity we cannot afford to ignore: for once, to support a candidate and a set of ideals that we believe in, and that have a chance to win.

Jeff Alson is an environmentalist in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

As the first non-white male to become a serious presidential candidate, Jackson is breaking down a multitude of institutional barriers that will make it easier for others who will follow.

of the Senate in 1986 were narrow Democratic victories in four southern states (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and North Carolina) despite large deficits among

Socialist Scholars Conference

Socialist Movements: National and International

April 8, 9, 10, 1988

**Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY
199 Chambers Street (near Trade Center), New York City**

The usual suspects and hundreds more . . .

- | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| • Paul Sweezy | • Bogdan Denitch | • Daniel Singer | • Irving Howe |
| • Paulette Pierce | • Robert Lekachman | • Ruth Milkman | • Frances Fox Piven |
| • Barbara Ehrenreich | • Cornel West | • Stanley Aronowitz | • Joanne Barkan |
| • Fred Siegel | • Stuart Hall | • Paulo Freire | • Judith Lorber |
| • Luciana Castellina | • Joanne Landy | • Ira Shor | |
| • Joseph Murphy | • Michael Harrington | • William Tabb | |

1988 Registration Form

Make checks payable to "Socialist Scholars Conference" and mail to:
R.L. Norman, Jr., CUNY Democratic Socialists Club, Rm. 801, 33 West 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.
Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for return of registration materials before conference.

Preregistration: _____ \$17.50 _____ \$10.00

Regular Registration: _____ \$25.00 _____ \$12.50

Professional Childcare available during the day on Saturday and Sunday.

☐ I need childcare for _____ children.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

ITT

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE S

If applicable affix your mailing label here.

I AM:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

☐ **MOVING.**

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

If possible affix your mailing label to facilitate the change. If no label is available be sure to include both the new and OLD zip codes with the complete addresses. Please allow 4 - 6 weeks for the address change.

☐ **SUBSCRIBING.** Fill out your name and address above and we will have IN THESE TIMES with news and analysis you can't find anywhere else in your mailbox within 4 - 6 weeks. Check price and term below. **ASTN7**

☐ **RENEWING.** Do it now and keep IN THESE TIMES coming without interruption. Affix your mailing label above and we will renew your account to automatically extend when your current subscription expires. Check price and term below. **ARST7**

☐ **SHOPPING.** Give an IN THESE TIMES gift subscription. It makes a perfect gift for friends, relatives, students or associates. Fill out your name and address above and name and address of recipient below. A handsome gift card will be sent. **XSTH7**

NAME OF RECIPIENT _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP _____

PRICE / TERM

- ☐ One year: \$34.95
- ☐ Six months: \$18.95
- ☐ Student retired, One year: \$24.95
- ☐ Institutional, One year: \$59.00
- ☐ Payment enclosed
- ☐ Bill me later
- ☐ Charge my VISA/MC

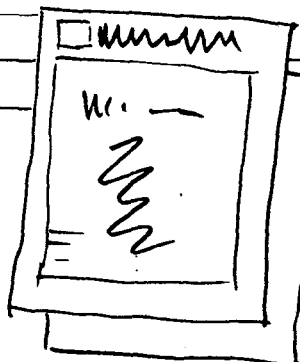
ACCT. NO. _____

EXP. DATE _____

Above prices for U.S. residents only. Foreign orders add \$13 per year.

In These Times Customer Service

1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054
1-800-435-0715; in Illinois 1-800-892-0753



Alter the vote

A practical illustration of the immediate effect of the House vote against aid to the contras came the day after President Reagan's proposal lost by eight votes. Contras ambushed a civilian vehicle in Segovia province in northern Nicaragua and killed 19 people including women and children.

The rejection of Reagan's \$36.5 million package was certainly a victory and those who capped long months of lobbying and organizational work had every right to go out and celebrate, but realism should not be abandoned. As the fate of those 19 Nicaraguans suggests, the contras will not stop murdering people, and have the supplies to accomplish that task, courtesy of the criminal negligence of the mainstream U.S. media.

Anyone who watched the House debate on February 3 must have been struck by the number of representatives who invoked the devotion of the U.S. to the Guatemalan (or "Arias") accords and who felt no shame in saying that so far as lack of "trust" was concerned, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega was the man to watch. (This personalization reached comical extremes right after the vote when the *San Francisco Chronicle's* headline read "Ortega Says War Will Continue Till Reagan Accepts His Terms," and the story below reported that Ortega warned his people not to expect "a process of peace and democracy" until President Reagan "comes to terms with the Sandinista revolution."

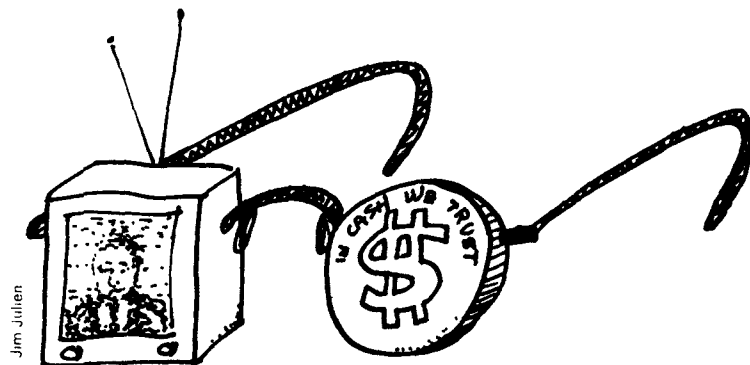
If the mainstream press had not been exhibiting the above-mentioned criminal negligence they would have reported that so far as the U.S. government was concerned the main consequence of the signing of the accords was a stepping up of illegal supply flights to the contras to one a day, allowing the contras to stockpile the arms, thus being able—as the press is now reporting without explaining why—to go on fighting for months to come, against the time the U.S. Congress changes its mind again.

Most of the time I watched the debate the screen seemed entirely filled with foam-flecked simulacra of Rep. Robert Dornan (R-CA) and it came as a distinct shock to see the venerable Rep. George Crockett (D-MI) quoting to his colleagues in the House something the mainstream media had omitted entirely: the call in the accords to all powers outside the region to stop supporting insurgent forces, viz., the contras; also the judgment of the independent verification commission set up to monitor compliance with the accords, that the U.S. had, by its supplies to the contras, been undermining the peace process.

The consequence of this failure in the press performing its supposed function will become clear over the months to come. The focus will be entirely on Nicaraguan duplicity and "bad faith," in which headlines will be given to any contra or contra-sympathizer inside or outside Nicaragua who cares to claim that Ortega and his comrades are not living up to a peace "process," his "process" redefined to mean the restoration of full capitalist relations in Nicaragua, re-writing of the Nicaraguan constitution to suit Elliott Abrams and Enrique Bermudez, pre-emptive amnesty to the men who blew up those 19 people on that bus. There will be covert operations similar to the one hatched between Lt. Col. Oliver North and Panamanian Gen. Manuel Noriega designed to show that the Sandinistas are covertly

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



aiding the Salvadoran FMLN. There will, in particular, be pressure to make the Sandinistas give a second TV channel to the opposition, the better to display their dedication to "democracy."

In other words, the war is not over by any means. What the vote did show is that the obdurate timidity of Congress and willful misinformation provided by the press were finally overwhelmed by popular opinion and by a tremendous grass-roots organizing effort that—perhaps fortunately—also went largely unnoticed in the mainstream press. The *New York Times*/CBS News poll taken between January 17 and 21 reflects the popular U.S. view of contra aid: 30 percent approved, 58 percent disapproved. More strikingly still, there was opposition in every category from left to right: conservatives were against contra aid 51 to 34.

The grass-roots organizing was nationwide, innovative and effective and it demonstrated yet again that the solidarity movement with Nicaragua is one of the broadest in the history of the country. This may not be known by the mainstream media, but it is certainly apparent to the campaign managers of the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination. When Mike Dukakis starts denouncing the CIA's secret wars and the U.S.' bloodstained record in Central America you may be sure it is not just because someone gave him a book by Noam Chomsky.

Can the U.S. press improve?

The matter of democracy and the mass media was the topic of a one-day conference in Los Angeles on January 30, organized by the group FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting). As one who participated I can say that I've rarely seen a more enthusiastic audience or one more interested in getting something done. Fourteen hundred registered and hundreds more were turned away. The only people who declined to appear were mainstream journalists—aside from columnist Jonathan Kwitny of the *Wall Street Journal*—thus providing an interesting contrast to MORE's A.J. Liebling Conventions of the early '70s. MORE's events were filled with mainstreamers, up to and including news proprietors in the shape of Katharine Graham of the *Washington Post*. In those distant days there was brave talk about democracy in the newsroom and other uplifting concepts. The battle lines are more clearly drawn.

The panels took people through familiar terrain: bias and omission, Central America, the Middle East, arms control, "national security." FAIR's material, including its monthly newsletter *Extra!* (call FAIR at 212-

475-4640, or write to it at 666 Broadway, Suite 40, NYC, NY, 10012), was on hand to furnish some fine examples of mainstream cretinism. My favorite is George Volsky's cautious mention in the *New York Times* for January 20 of Honduras "whose territory is reportedly an important part of the U.S.-directed contra supply effort" (emphasis added). If anyone starts denying that the U.S. major media are government-influenced, show them that. Equally instructive was a list in one edition of *Extra!* of *New York Times* headlines about the Russian Revolution in its early days. People perturbed by reports from Stephen Kinzer and James LeMoyné of collapsing Sandinistas may be encouraged to know that between November 1917 and November 1919 the *New York Times* reported the collapse of the Soviets 91 times. Headlines in 1919 included, "Jan. 9, Trotsky Dictator—Arrests Lenin—Ousts Bolshevik Premier and Now Rules Alone in Russia..." Jan. 11, "Kremlin is Lenin's Prison," though Lenin was not idle during his incarceration since another headline in the paper that day announced that "Lenin Abolishes Money..." October 31, "Lenin Plans To Lie Low. Says Reds Must Await Another Chance When Soviet Regime Falls."

There's no particular secret as to why FAIR's conference was such a well-attended event. The broadness of the anti-intervention and solidarity movements concerning Central America has produced an important segment of the educated public, as well supplied with its alternative sources of information—including personal experience in the region—and filled with knowledge which runs directly counter to what is seen on mainstream television and read in major newspapers or magazines. This is a critical opposition that really knows what it is talking about.

Second, the contradictions between the pretensions of the "free press" and the squalid reality have become more vulgarly apparent than ever. As Jeff Cohen, executive director of FAIR, pointed out in his speech, NBC is owned by a corporation, General Electric, which is the country's second-largest military contractor, second-largest vendor of nuclear power systems. With such facts on the table it is impossible to talk about a free and independent press without bursting into laughter. Third, the constant re-definition of permissible political discourse further and further to the right has made an increasingly large number of people acutely aware that about half the political and cultural spectrum is now thus disenfranchised venues of public debate in the major media.

Hence the increasing fury at the undemocratic nature of the major media, sequestered in accelerating oligopoly and compliant to the dictates of government, making

the worst of both worlds, private ownership and state control. The question is: where does a campaign against this perversion of democracy lead?

It begins with agitation and pressure—calls to TV producers, letters to editors, media outreach and education. It continues with political and cultural organizing, particularly in the case of publicly funded radio and TV along with creation of alternative media. It defines what a truly vigorous struggle for free communications could include, such as enforced divestiture of NBC and GE, accountability by PBS, restructuring of the entire system of broadcast license-holding and public ownership and access to broadcasting by other than the wealthy.

Anyone talking seriously about democracy and mass media is led rapidly toward an overall social vision and the need for a political movement to propel the march towards it. I recently read an acute analysis by Robert McChesney, of the School of Communications at the University of Washington, of the reasons for the lack of debate, concerning the ownership, structure and control of the mass media in American political life. Why, asks McChesney, did the opposing forces fail, even though the final struggle took place in the onset of the Depression when disgust with corporate control was profound?

He answers that in essence, capitalism and the sanctity of private property were off limits as a topic for public discussion—as they had been since at least World War I. So the reformers were thus ill-equipped to answer the commercial broadcasters.

The upshot of these failures were, as McChesney writes, "the corporate media have actively cultivated an ideology that the status quo is the *only* rational media structure available to a democratic and freedom-loving society. The corporate media have ardently encouraged the belief that even the consideration of alternatives was tantamount to a call for totalitarianism." This absurd posture is invariably maintained by the employees of the corporate media whose cultural and political vision has the same conceptual radius as their companies' annual reports, and the journalism schools who reproduce the vision and personnel serving the system.

So it's clear that criticism of the corporate media ends up with a basic political program, resting on the proposition that there is a fundamental contradiction between a corporately owned press and a press fulfilling its duties as a critical social institution. It is not as though such questions have not been raised in the past. As recently as the late '60s the Federal Communications Commission under President Johnson was rejecting a bid by International Telephone and Telegraph for ABC on the grounds that it was contrary to the public interest. In the mid-'30s the philosopher John Dewey was arguing in his essay "Our Un-Free Press" that though minor reform of press performance was not to be discouraged, "The only really fundamental approach is to enquire concerning the necessary effect of the present economic system upon the whole system of publicity...The question, under this mode of approach, is not how many specific abuses there are and how they may be remedied, but how far genuine intellectual freedom and social responsibility are possible on any large scheme under the existing economic regime."

The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy

By William Julius Wilson
University of Chicago Press
254 pp., \$19.95

By James Jennings

WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON'S *The Truly Disadvantaged* represents a major breakthrough in debates of the last 10 to 20 years about race, poverty and public policy. Part of Wilson's rationale for the book is the belief that conservative policy analysts and ideologues have gained the upper hand in presenting their case about black urban pov-

POVERTY

erty. He hopes to provide a framework of liberal analysis that will allow a better understanding of the causes of intensifying black poverty.

Wilson presents several powerful arguments and supporting data that debunk the claims of some conservative social policy analysts regarding urban poverty and race. The book also makes significant contributions to the state of knowledge regarding race, poverty and public policy. But despite the achievements of the book, Wilson is limited by his assumption that debates about urban poverty and race must be confined between liberals and conservatives.

The author amasses impressive evidence that the major cause of growing poverty and pathology in the black community is the increasing joblessness of black males, as well as the declining number of black males available to support families. He writes:

"...contrary to popular opinion, there is little evidence to provide a strong case for welfare as the primary cause of family breakups, female-headed households, and out-of-wedlock births...the evidence for the influence of male joblessness is much more persuasive...we argue that both the black delay in marriage and the lower rate of remarriage, each of which is associated with high percentages of out-of-wedlock births and female-headed households, can be directly tied to the labor-market status of black males. As we have documented, black women, especially young black women, are facing a shrinking pool of 'marriageable' (i.e., economically stable) men."

Social isolation: Furthermore, the well-documented breakup of the black family has occurred under a context of "social isolation," and not a "culture of poverty" as some liberals-turned-conservatives contend. While the latter concept emphasizes individual and group attitudes as well as a social and psychological pathology, the former emphasizes "the class transformation of the

inner city, including the growing concentration of poverty in the inner-city neighborhoods."

This transformation, in Wilson's view, cannot be understood without considering the effects of fundamental changes in the urban economy on the lower-income minorities. Wilson's concept of social isolation is much more comprehensive and useful than the culture-of-poverty thesis, which presumes the social system to be neutral in its effects on individuals and groups despite their different relative economic, cultural and political positions.

Wilson boldly calls for a comprehensive public policy to address black poverty that will "require a radicalism that neither Democratic nor Republican parties have as yet been realistic enough to propose." In his final chapter Wilson presents his public policy proposals. These include programs responding not to a culture of poverty, but rather to those social and economic forces that have produced the truly disadvantaged and the pathology associated with this status. Wilson calls for job training programs, balanced economic growth and full employment.

De-emphasizing race: Despite

Wilson's contributions to debates of urban poverty and race, several weaknesses remain in *The Truly Disadvantaged*. He tends to de-emphasize the role of race in American society. It is one thing to show that broad economic forces, and demography should be the major targets of a program for social change aimed at benefitting blacks, rather than job discrimination on the basis of race.

The black family's breakup has occurred in a context of "social isolation," not a "culture of poverty."

It is quite another thing to analyze social situations involving blacks as if race were no longer significant.

While many intellectuals both black and white would agree with Wilson that genuine social change must address society's fundamental economic and technological dynamics, rather than discrimination per se, many would see the denial of a racial reality in America as unfounded, to say the least. A report

issued by the Atlanta-based Center for Democratic Renewal, for example, documented more than 2,900 cases of "hate violence" ranging from vandalism to murder between 1980 and 1986.

According to some accounts the problem of racial violence has been increasing. This has led the U.S. Congress to begin investigating racial violence under the auspices of its Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on criminal justice. Wilson correctly points out that problems of poverty, crime and family destabilization reflect broad forces of "societal disorganization" rather than merely racism or job discrimination.

Wilson seems to be moving toward a class analysis of the social ills that he is studying. But this does not negate or run contrary to the existing racial hierarchy, which helps maintain the status quo. Wilson's implied dismissal of episodes like Howard Beach and Forsyth County, and his downplaying of continuing urban de facto segregation reflects a lack of touch with the everyday reality of black Americans.

Intellectual diversity: Wilson's view of the black activist sector as intellectually monolithic is also problematic. Throughout the book he makes references to "black" viewpoints without citation. It can be argued, however, that socioeconomic "difference" within the black community was a major theme in the writings and speeches of black scholars and activists.

In many instances Wilson's discussion of these viewpoints suggests an unfamiliarity with ongoing debates in the black community about such issues as urban poverty, class and race.

This is typical of the ideological blindness of many "liberal" scholars who seek to discuss or explain the positions of blacks on public issues without full knowledge of their myriad writings, speeches or scholarship and certainly not of the spectrum of ideology in the black community. Wilson and other liberal writers may overlook this diversity because their thinking, approaches and analyses of social issues in the black community are confined within a liberal-conservative paradigm.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of Wilson's book is his romanticism about politics. The public policy proposals which he briefly notes would indeed have a major impact on the black underclass in some of America's cities. He is correct in calling for solutions that would seem radical compared to solutions traditionally advocated by the two national parties. But in discussing how such a program can be implemented, the author states simplistically that the agenda "for liberal policymakers is to improve the life chances of truly disadvantaged groups such as the

ghetto underclass by emphasizing programs to which the more advantaged groups of all races and class backgrounds can positively relate."

In other words, if we can somehow couch beneficial public policy for blacks in ways which either do not threaten whites, or that powerful interest groups can also benefit from, we may be able to create programs to help the black underclass. This reflects Wilson's meekness regarding class analysis. It also plays into the hands of neoconservative thinkers who would argue that liberal public policy is keeping blacks in a position of dependency. Wilson's liberal political solution calls for black interests to be confined and limited by what powerful white groups may believe is in their best interests.

Coalition problems: He suggests that the problems of the truly disadvantaged may require "non-racial" solutions such as full employment, balanced economic growth, and manpower training and education. Such efforts would certainly go much further than affirmative action palliatives, but how is this transformation to be accomplished? Many of the historical and current social, cultural, and economic benefits enjoyed by whites are due to entrenched class and race hierarchies. And while some public issues can be resolved by bringing together the needs of various social sectors, many other issues are zero-sum in nature.

Wilson also speaks of broad, reform-oriented coalitions, but such coalitions will not emerge until the truly disadvantaged organize themselves politically. Many liberal (and white "leftist") scholars seem to shy away from the need for the truly disadvantaged to organize politically. This is important not only as a coalition-building tool, but also as a way for them to begin controlling those economic and social forces transforming their neighborhoods.

The broad political coalition that Wilson calls for will not respond effectively to the needs of the poorer sectors of the black community if these sectors are but "junior" partners. Blacks must organize themselves on the basis of enhancing the quality of life in their communities, and on the basis of political equality with their potential allies in any coalition.

Wilson's book provides an excellent liberal rejoinder to the neo-conservatives. Yet despite its important contributions to ongoing public policy debates regarding race and poverty, it falls short of a complete class and racial analysis and still approaches the black urban poor as politically incompetent. ■

James Jennings is Associate Professor and Senior Fellow at the William M. Trotter Institute, University of Massachusetts at Boston.



Escaping from the poorhouse of ideas

**The Last Intellectuals:
American Culture in
the Age of Academe**

By Russell Jacoby
Basic Books, 290 pp., \$18.95

By James Weinstein

From public intellectuals to private entrepreneurs

CAN THERE BE A POPULAR LEFT without intellectuals to give its principles substance and to submit its activities to critical examination? Or, can there be a healthy community of left intellectuals without a political or social movement to sustain it and to make use of its thought? Neither of these questions is explicit in Russell Jacoby's *The Last Intellectuals*, but both are lying there, begging to be asked.

Jacoby clearly values ideas and rigorous thinking, and is appalled by the virtual absence from American life of a generation of "public intellectuals"—people who think and write in the vernacular for a general audience. But while the book is about intellectuals and academics, it is written in plain but forceful English. Indeed, the book's major theme is the increasing isolation and social irrelevance of intellectuals, who have found their home almost exclusively in the universities. Their work, increasingly characterized by obscure verbiage, pretentious displays of esoteric learning and academic one-upmanship, is seen by Jacoby as a retreat into personal security to the detriment of a healthy democratic society.

Jacoby attributes this baneful development primarily to the rapid expansion of higher education in the U.S. since World War II, and partly to the process of suburbanization since the late '40s. Universities and college attendance have transformed our society in recent decades. In 1900 college was an elite affair, with about 4 percent of 18-22 year-olds attending. By the late '60s, half of all 18-19 year olds were experiencing some form of higher education. This rapid growth of colleges and universities, in itself a positive development, fortuitously coincided with the disintegration of the New Left in the late '60s and provided a haven for thousands of disoriented young radicals looking for careers.

Marxist non-subversion: In their new workplaces, contrary to conservative howls about Marxist subversion of the universities, academic leftists and Marxists have increasingly become an inoffensive part of their profession. Pursuing studies that threaten nothing but the possibility of an intellectually vigorous left, their relation to American society increasingly resembles that of cloistered monks and nuns—speaking and writing in Latin—to the laity.

While "Marxist" and "radical" caucuses in various disciplines proliferate, the products of these academics' efforts are all but incomprehensible to anyone not conversant with the latest intellectual fads. Privatization, career goals and academic honors

replace the interaction with a general readership that characterized earlier generations of public intellectuals.

Jacoby traces these developments brilliantly, and he does a great deal more. In a section on the conservative complaint about the left injecting politics into culture, he points out that rarely have general period-

POLITICS

icals devoted to the arts and scholarship been as narrowly political as neoconservative journals like the *New Criterion* or the *American Scholar*. Of *Commentary* he writes that while it once may have been tolerant of liberals and radicals, it was never so relentlessly political until it became conservative.

And in a section on the disproportionate number of Jewish intellectuals who have become neoconservatives, he reverses the usual argument that estrangement from a Christian civilization edged Jews into reformism or revolution. "Personal alienation," he writes, "does not engender a hardy radicalism. The angst that expresses the pain of separation also craves union—or its substitute, recognition and acceptance." As a result, left Jewish intellectuals, wanting desperately to become "American" have been scrambling to the right since the '60s. But a C. Wright Mills or a Dwight

Macdonald had no such need. Their radicalism was not that of the outsider trying to get in, but of the insider fully aware of the corruption of our society. They were, therefore, much more difficult to corrupt.

Generational changes: Jacoby's theory is in part generational. Those born around 1940 and after, he writes, emerged in a society where the identity of universities and intellectual life was almost complete, while for those born before 1940 universities did not play as large a role. In the earlier years, to be an intellectual did not require going to college. It did require moving to New York or Chicago and writing books and articles for widely-read journals. The "classical" intellectuals Jacoby mentions—Lewis Mumford, Dwight Macdonald, Edmund Wilson—were all born around 1900. His "transitional" generation—he names Alfred Kazin, Daniel Bell, Irving Howe—were born between 1915 and 1920. These generations are then contrasted to the post-'40s crowd, which was hit with the "full weight of academization."

There is some merit to this argument. But there is also something equally important that Jacoby misses. His two earlier generations grew up during periods when there were dynamic left political and social movements that valued theory and cherished intellectuals. But the post-'40s people grew up either with-

out a left (before 1960) or as part of the '60s New Left that cared little for its past and that had open contempt for rigorous thought. For New Leftists, the past was a mess, something to avoid but not learn from.

New Left trajectory: In no earlier period could an outstanding leader of the left do what Tom Hayden did in the dozen or so years from 1962 to the mid-'70s. Starting as an advocate of participatory democracy in '62, he moved to manipulative community organizing in Newark in '65, then to living in a Red commune and doing target practice in preparation for an im-

Rapid growth of colleges and universities coincided with the New Left's disintegration in the late '60s, providing a haven for thousands of disoriented radicals.

agined revolution to come at the beginning of the '70s and then to running for office as a moderately liberal Democrat in the mid-'70s. No one with a grounding in history, or with respect for rigorous

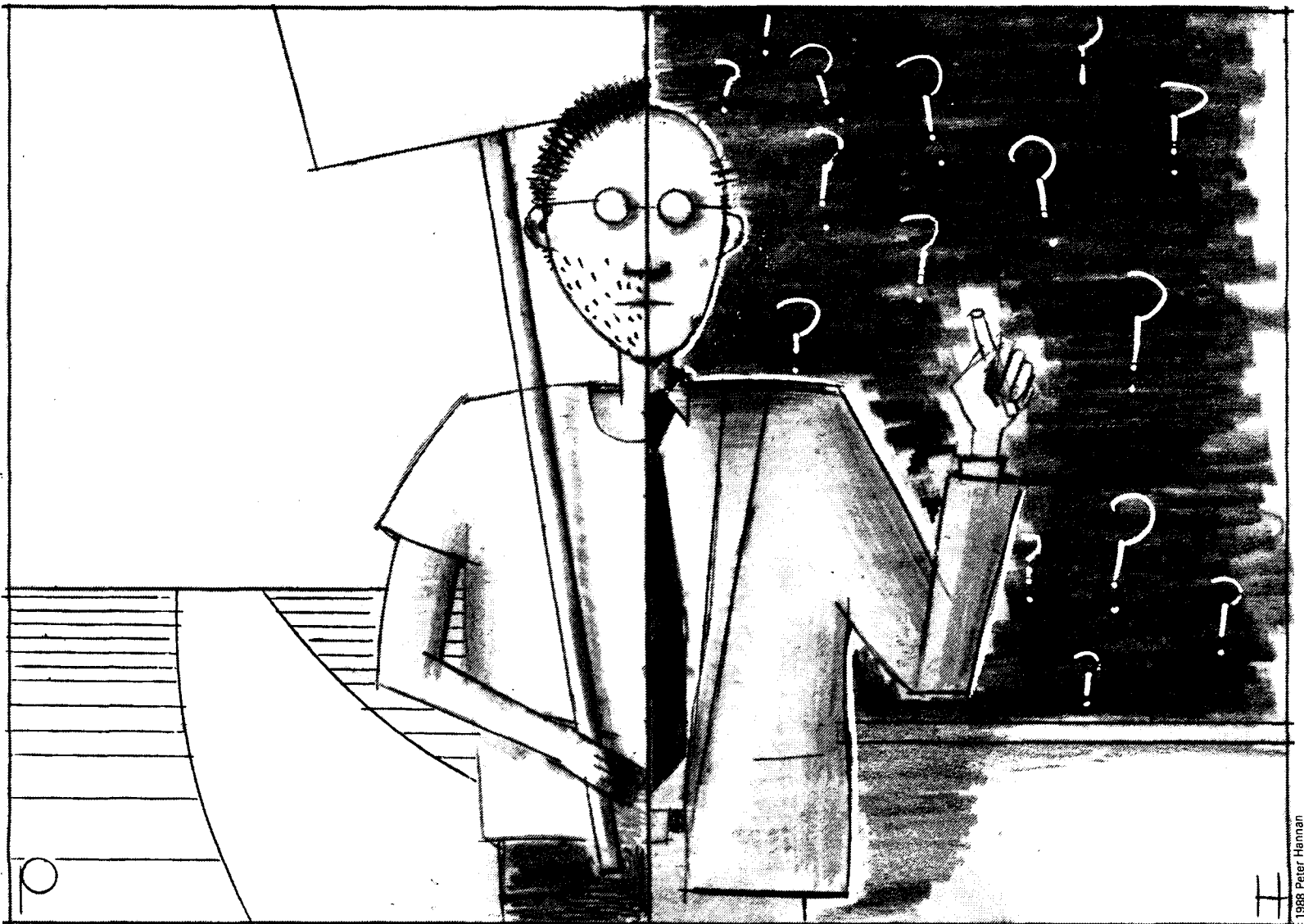
thought, could have had such a trajectory. But Hayden was more nearly typical than unique. There wasn't much need for intellectuals in that climate.

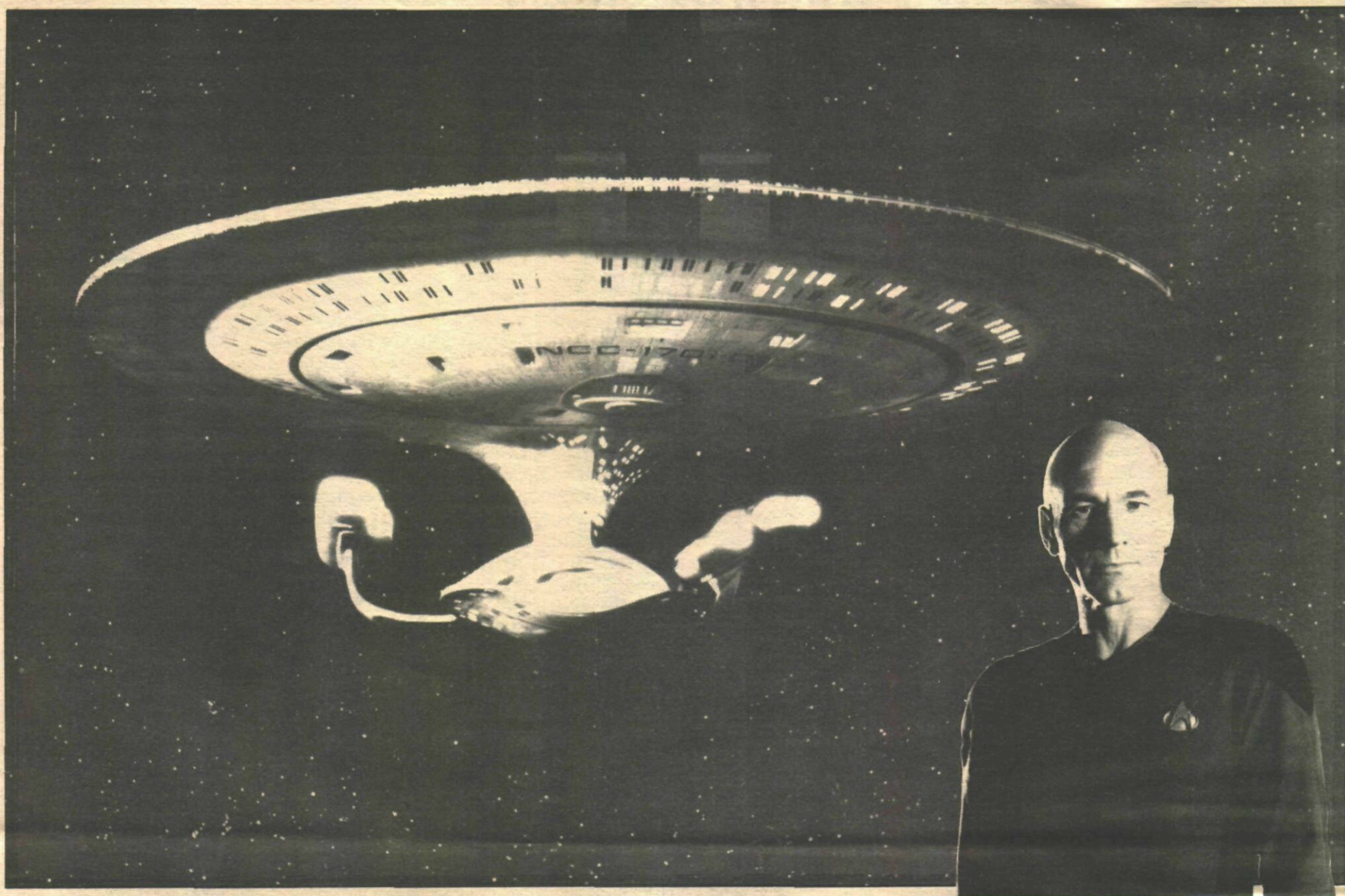
In short, those who grew up as intellectuals in the post-World War II years had much less of a public for whom to function than did their predecessors. The only market for their wares was the then rapidly expanding universities.

There is another problem with *The Last Intellectuals*, one that Jacoby comes close to recognizing in a reference to black women novelists, but then shies away from. It is in part a problem of definition. Jacoby defines public intellectuals as those who are known to and read by society at large. As he notes, pitifully few of these have emerged in the past 20-30 years.

But his definition seems too restrictive—or too grandiose. There are people who function as public intellectuals in the black community, the women's movement and the gay movement. And there are those who function the same way on the general left, including—not to be too self-serving—those, for example, who write for *In These Times*. These people do not meet Jacoby's standard for public intellectuals because we no longer have a significant socialist presence in American political life, and because the lefts that we do have are fragmented, resembling a bazaar of small shops, rather than a supermarket.

But these problems aside, *The Last Intellectuals* is a book not only well worth reading, but a lot of fun to read. It is a book that will make you think. There aren't a lot of those. ■





© 1987 Paramount Pictures Corporation

Star Trek: The Next Generation boldly goes where maybe only one other show has gone before

By James Hynes

THE MAIN THING TO REMEMBER about *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, producer/creator Gene Roddenberry's sequel/remake of the old *Star Trek*, is that it is shrewd. This is quite a change when you consider how slapdash and lovably cheap the old show was—even now you can still groove on the bridge crew throwing themselves across the set whenever the *Enterprise* is under attack, get off on the vacuum-defying whoosh the ship makes as it dopplers past the camera, or grok William Shatner sucking in his gut.

The old show's production values never came anywhere near matching its earnest Kennedy-liberal pretensions. And *that*, Virginia, is the very essence of the old show's continuing fascination, the tension between the issues the show raised, however clumsily, and its inherently kitschy *mise-en-scene*. Whether you take it seriously as morality play, or watch it

smirkingly as cultural artifact, the old *Star Trek* is the Sherlock Holmes of television, complete with its own fanatical appreciation society and secondary literature, an undeniably rich vein for both Trivial Pursuit and cultural criticism.

Space for rent: Given the old show's bitter history with NBC and its subsequent track record as a fabulously successful money-maker, Roddenberry's first bit of shrewdness is to bypass the networks and place his new show directly in syndication, which is where producers—as opposed to networks—make their real money.

Whatever you may think of Roddenberry's relative merits as a pop guru—and in a year that gave us Gary Hart, Jim Bakker, and Oliver North, he doesn't look half bad—he is an honest to God television auteur.

It must be sweet revenge to know that not only is the new *Star Trek* a solid hit in syndication, but that some network affiliates have even been dropping network program-

ming to show it. As the old Vulcan proverb has it, what goes around, comes around.

As they also used to say on Vulcan, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Although the new show is set 85 years further into the future, the world of the United Federation of Planets is pretty much the same. The Klingons are Federation allies now, to the extent of a Klingon of-

TELEVISION

ficer serving on the bridge of the new *Enterprise*, but the Romulans are still a pain in the butt, requiring the Neutral Zone to keep them at bay. Meanwhile, you've still got tricorders, phasers, the transporter and warp drive. Most of the material changes in the new show, in fact, are matters of emphasis, style and detail. Roddenberry now has more than a million bucks to spend per episode (as opposed to less than \$200,000 per episode before), and he has done his best to bring the art direction and special effects

up to the standards of a post-*Star Wars* audience. The effects are state of the art (thanks to George Lucas' ubiquitous company, Industrial Light and Magic). The interior of the *Enterprise* is brighter and more detailed (though the new bridge looks like a cross between a singles bar and the set for *Donahue*). And the new formfitting uniforms are pretty rakish and revealing, befitting a new generation of nautalized actors. The best example of the new look, though, is the new *Enterprise* itself, sleek and organic looking, no longer the three toilet paper tubes and a dinner plate of old (though it still whooshes past the camera: *la plus ca change, la plus ca meme chose*, as they say in *Proxima Centauri*).

Chemistry experiments: But anybody can buy art direction and special effects. Roddenberry's smartest move has been to recognize that the greatest strengths of the old show were its cast and its sincere liberal optimism. Attempting to recreate the chemistry is the hardest thing to do. The most im-

portant, and least discussed, feature of every successful episodic series has always been the sense of community a series creates for the viewer.

Star Trek was especially successful at establishing this link, through the viewer's vicarious participation in the fascinating three-way relationship between Captain Kirk, Mr. Spock, and Dr. McCoy. It's tempting to wax Freudian here—Spock as ego, McCoy as id, Kirk as superego—but to limit them to archetypes does the characters an injustice. What is important is their relationship to each other—Spock and McCoy's mutual irritation matched only by their mutual grudging respect; McCoy as Kirk's avuncular sidekick, the only man who can tell the captain he's full of shit; Kirk and Spock's almost brotherly affection for each other—and the context in which it operates: many of the original 78 episodes pivot around the conflict between friendship and duty.

To date the new series lacks any character or group of characters

with the gut appeal of the original three. Although the cast is not that much larger—nine as opposed to the original eight, if you count Uhura, Scotty, et al.—it seems larger, since the attention devoted to them is more diffuse.

Some of the functions fulfilled by a single character in the old show are divided up in the new one. Spock's role as the half-alien voice of reason and resident psychic has been split between the occasionally comic android Commander Data and the exotic half-alien Counselor Troi, a sexy telepath. Kirk's role has been broken down between the new captain, Jean-Luc Picard, and his Number One, Commander Riker. Picard may be captain, but Riker leads all the landing parties (now called "away teams"), not to mention taking over Kirk's leading-man responsibilities. As a final blow to the old arrangement, not only is there no one to stand in for Dr. McCoy's iconoclasm ("I'm a doctor, dammit, not an escalator"), but there seem to be no Vulcans at all on the new *Enterprise*.

Recombo Kirk: The split of Kirk's function in the story—both in terms of procedure and psychology—is particularly interesting. Kirk was virile, quick to anger, and passionate to the point of impetuosity, unself-consciously patriarchal and given to speechifying about truth, justice, and the Federation way. As played by Patrick Stewart, an English Shakespearean actor of great presence and dignity, Captain Picard is both more complex and more vulnerable than Kirk. Although he can be gruff and bluster, he is more unsure of his emotions and much more self-conscious than Kirk ever was. Where Kirk hardly ever doubted himself or his mission, Picard—if not in the dialogue, then in Stewart's expressive eyes—seems to question himself and what he's doing with the making of every decision. It's as if Hamlet were the captain of the *Enterprise* (while Kirk had a string of lovers, Picard's only flashback to date features...his mother).

More to the point, Picard lacks much of Kirk's sexual energy, which has been vested in Commander Riker, who, as played by Jonathan Frakes, comes across as a soulful Robert Urich. Whereas Kirk's strongest emotional bond was with Science Officer Spock, Picard maintains only an edgy, professional relationship with Riker. And no wonder: the split in responsibilities leaves Picard with little to do except brood aboard the *Enterprise* while Riker gets to lead all the away teams and even, in one recent episode, bed the leader of a matriarchal planet. To boldly go where no man has gone before, indeed.

Yet the fact that the male-bonding of the show has not been reproduced may be Roddenberry's savviest step yet. The new *Star Trek* has an added element of post-Mary Tyler Moore sexual tension with

men and women and even families living and working together on a military starship—in skin-tight uniforms, no less.

The women on the old *Enterprise* were mainly tokens in miniskirts; Lt. Uhura was little more than a glorified telephone operator. The atmosphere on the old *Enterprise* was predominantly that of an all-male nuclear submarine, but the new *Enterprise* is a cross between *Ice Station Zebra* and *Moonlighting*. The ship doctor, the security chief, and one of the chief officers are all women. (Even the old signature phrase has been changed to "Where no one has gone before.")

Women in charge? The presence of strong women characters adds a kind of Tracy and Hepburn quality to the bridge of the *Enterprise*: Captain Picard and Dr. Crusher maintain more than a professional regard for each other; Commander Riker and Counselor Troi are old flames; and even the tough security officer, Lt. Yar, had a one stardate stand with Data, who is programmed (yikes!) to provide a full range of sexual pleasure. (Is this what they mean by safe sex?)

The presence of women on the

The sleek new *Enterprise* is a far cry from the three toilet paper tubes and dinner plate of old.

new *Star Trek*, however, is emblematic of the virtues and the faults of Gene Roddenberry's vintage liberalism. Certainly he deserves credit for giving us women in positions of authority and for not condescending to them: all three women are portrayed as first rate in their professions. In keeping with recent depictions of working women such as *Cagney and Lacey*, they are often better at their jobs than at managing their personal lives.

But in the end, leave it to *Star Trek* to fumble the ball, to embody the classic failing of liberalism: it raises the big political, social, and philosophical issues, and then usually backs down to a conventional solution. In a future where the sexes are ostensibly equal, would there still be the same old hierarchical military command structure? What are sex and romance like when androids can provide pleasure? And what about family life? How does Dr. Crusher balance her career and her responsibilities to her teenage son? None of these questions seems to have been thought through on the new *Star Trek*. The show stops short of full equality: none of the women characters have any command authority. Why aren't there any women starship captains in Gene

Roddenberry's future?

A future behind the times:

This is not only a political failing, but a failure of the imagination, which was ever *Star Trek's* biggest flaw, right from the start: as science fiction, it was simply never any good. Much of the science was downright goofy, and the whole premise of the show was old-fashioned even in 1966, harking back to Flash Gordon and to the gee-whiz space operas of E.E. "Doc" Smith. In the 20 years since the original *Star Trek*, published science fiction has undergone many changes, the most important of which are the arrival of a number of strong women, and often explicitly feminist, writers, and the rise of cyberpunk, a dark subgenre that features sex and drugs, Chanderlesque plots, and a frightening milieu of urban decay and corporate greed.

But the new *Star Trek*, its mild feminism aside, ambles along as if Arthur C. Clarke were still the leading sci-fi author, the Western-style Federation still facing off with the totalitarian Romulans in a cold war writ large. One can only wonder what *Star Trek* would be like if Roddenberry had modeled his new show on contemporary science fiction.

But what the hell, it's good to see the *Enterprise* again. For all its failures of imagination or political insight, *Star Trek* was almost unique in the '60s in at least raising issues such as pacifism, race relations, and imperialism. It was unique as well in providing a racially and sexually mixed cast. And now, when the hot trends on TV are yuppie narcissism (*thirtysomething*), post-modernist self-indulgence (*Moonlighting*), and insufferable sitcom moralizing (*Cosby* et al.), a little of Roddenberry's New Frontier spirit can't hurt.

Even as science fiction, the optimism of the new *Star Trek* is a welcome antidote to the hothouse nihilism of cyberpunk. Certainly there are kinks to be worked out: too many of the new shows are simply retreads of old episodes, many of the original stories are half-baked and confused, and none of the new episodes have the allegorical oomph of the best of the old *Star Trek*. But even so, the new cast is appealing and varied, leaving lots of room for interesting relationships, the special effects are swell, especially if you've got a color TV, and I can't help it—after all these years, I still get a lump in my throat whenever I hear that opening fanfare. Best of all, it's refreshing to see a stylish, well-meaning show in which not only men and women, but different races and even species work harmoniously together for peace and justice. So God bless the *Enterprise* and all who sail in her. Or as we used to say in the old days, live long and prosper. ■

James Hynes lives in Iowa City, Iowa. He swears on a stack of *Star Trek* novels that he is not a Trekkie.

If You Can't Beat Em...

The networks aren't taking viewer flight lightly. (In cabled homes, network watching is down below 50%, and independent stations are gleefully picking up viewers as well.) They're doing what any good oligopolist would do: branching out. And since ABC and NBC are now owned by conglomerates themselves, they have in-house expertise to draw on. In cable programming, ABC already owns most of ESPN, and NBC and ABC each own a third of Lifetime and Arts & Entertainment. NBC's still toying with helping Ted Turner out of his money crunch by eating a large part of his business, and NBC CEO Robert Wright is considering getting into cable companies.

...Buy 'Em

On the entertainment oligopoly front, the major movie studios are also marching forward. In the past decade, old Hollywood has become part of gigantic conglomerates. Columbia Pictures is part of the Coca-Cola empire, which has merged the studio with Tri-Star Pictures. Paramount is part of Gulf & Western, which also owns cable programming interests. News Corporation Ltd. (controlled by Rupert Murdoch) owns 20th Century Fox, as well as TV stations, the Fox Broadcasting network, and newspapers. Conglomerate MCA controls Universal, and Warner Communications runs not only its movie studio but also a music business, as well as part of MTV and Nickelodeon.

But ever since an antitrust suit in 1948, there's been one field the movie studios couldn't play in: exhibition. Although the law hasn't changed, studios have been buying into theaters since 1985, when Columbia bought the Walter Reade chain. (Now it also owns 300 Loews Theater screens, thanks to the engulfing of Tri-Star.) Then MCA bought a half-interest in gigantic Cineplex Odeon, and Paramount leapfrogged off its base of ownership in Canadian cinemas to buy 500 screens in the U.S. Warner, not to be left out, is buying out half of Gulf & Western's theater interests.

Control of theaters goes along with studios' long-range plans to control movies' many venues—especially video. And not a peep from the Justice Department, which in 1948 had found price fixing and monopolistic tendencies in studio-owned theaters (independent theater owners were being run out of business). Today the Justice Department argues that there's no need to enforce the restriction, which in any case applied only to the old studios. There are, Justice officials point out, plenty of movies, more studios, and video provides alternatives and a market challenge to theaters.

Meanwhile, the first effects of vertical integration have been seen. The rising price of movie ticket prices was launched by Cineplex Odeon, which has also been a pioneer in inter-studio warfare that shows up in exhibition. In some places Cineplex Odeon refused to show Tri-Star pictures offered them on terms it didn't like. Of course, moviegoers deluged by the wash of new product may not even notice they missed a few—and they will, if they blink.

But the tightening conglomerate grip on entertainment marketing ultimately means fewer openings for those crazy entrepreneurs who come up with something new or who still believe in showing repertory golden oldies. It has far-reaching consequences, not only in what we see on the screen, but how it's made. And the weakening position of entertainment unions, as producers scabble toward the bottom line, is one of the echo effects from celluloid vertical integration.

Kids Flip the Channel

As if network programmers didn't have enough headaches, there go the kids. Apparently sated with cut-rate network cartoons, they're flipping to cable, videocassettes, and video games, where there's more action. This may mean goodbye to the He-Man era, and programmers are taking the cue. The Lorimar production company is brainstorming more live-action shows, and independent TV stations are booking game shows for kids. If kids' TV is taking on a more grown-up look, that's in line with the fact that kids are acting more like grown-up consumers. Teenage Research Unlimited, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, figures that teenagers will spend \$78 billion this year, up from \$65 billion in 1985. And according to a Yankelovich survey done in conjunction with Nickelodeon children's cable network, a quarter of kids aged 6 to 15 cook their own dinners, making food marketers scurry to appeal to their taste buds on the tube. ■

© 1988 Pat Aufderheide

Iowa

Continued from page 7

The rules of the game: With a puzzle of an American flag on the wall behind him and candidate name signs spread along the walls among first-aid charts, a picture of Jesus, a floral painting and an upright piano, Methodist minister Bill Olmstead called the meeting to order. "This is an occupational hazard of mine," he quipped as he started. "We're going to take up a collection. I would ask the organist to render an appropriate tune, but I guess we can't do that."

Sporting a Jesse Jackson '88 button on his suspenders, Olmstead explained the rules of the caucus. With 98 participants, a candidate needed 15 supporters to be "viable." Failing that, his supporters could group as undecided or throw support to a second choice. With his signal to caucus, the packed room slowly reshuffled itself. One woman carried a Breakfast of Champions poster with Jackson's face on the Wheaties box. Another organizer handed out red stickers saying, "I'm gonna caucus for Dukakis."

The Dukakis group was one short of being viable and began hunting for another delegate. The undersized Simon group cut a deal with Jackson backers: if two of their group were named delegates, they'd count as Jackson backers (giving Jackson at least a gain of one delegate from their move).

A cheer went up from the Dukakis group when a 15th person joined. "You can be anything you want," he was told. Meanwhile a Jackson partisan tried to peel away Gephardt supporters to no avail, arguing that Jackson has been on the front line for family farmers and unlike Gephardt has a national base of support. A survey of caucus-goers showed nearly half of those whose primary concern was farming supported Gephardt (Sen. Robert Dole took a similar share of Iowa Republicans concerned primarily with farm issues).

Zola Lowden and Margaret Smith lived most of their lives on farms but now reside in Greenfield. Lowden was for Gephardt, because of his concern about farms and Social Security and because she feared that if she supported Jackson she'd "be wasting my vote." Smith arrived undecided among Gephardt, Simon and Jackson, but rejected Dukakis as too "Eastern." Ultimately she backed Jackson, despite her friend's misgivings. Julie Derby, a teacher, and Linda Miller, the wife of the Republican manager of a local

factory, were more typical white-collar Dukakis supporters, concerned about education and homelessness and impressed with his experience.

It took a while to fill all the thankless committee positions for the local Democratic Party, but unlike some caucuses there was virtually no discussion of resolutions in Greenfield. "We started a very long process," Olmstead said in conclusion. "One of the great things about this country is that we'll elect a president—and we hope that it will be of this party, but in any case he will be president of the U.S."

Down the road from Iowa: The start of the nomination process in Iowa dealt a severe blow to Vice President George Bush on the Republican side, but it probably settled little for the Democrats. Gephardt's extreme devotion to Iowa (144 days of campaigning) and his image tailored and retailored for the caucus may not pay off elsewhere. As the

caucuses approached, Gephardt the Korean-basher was already turning himself into a promoter of a world common market.

Gephardt did best in the poorer, more rural counties of southern Iowa, scoring well in a few blue-collar towns as well. But his labor support has always been overestimated (even the auto workers, most disposed toward him, could not muster a majority for endorsement).

A national CBS/*New York Times* poll recently showed an upturn from a year ago in the percentages of people who feel their lives have gotten worse in the past five years, and who feel their lives will worsen in the next five years. By a margin of 40 to 33 percent registered voters are also more inclined to vote for a Democrat than a Republican this year. And, like Iowans surveyed on caucus night, they rank the federal deficit as the most important problem, followed by unemployment.

That focus on the deficit has hobbled the Democrats. Simon in particular seemed hurt by advocacy of new programs, like his plan to create jobs, and by his unwillingness to state forcefully that if the money is needed, the rich should pay most. However, it does create an opening for Democrats who want, either through incentives or controls on the private economy, to produce economic results without spending huge sums. And that fits the "economic populism" that yielded such a strong reception for Jackson and votes for Gephardt in Iowa.

It seems likely that it will take many months, not a few "bounces" from Iowa and New Hampshire, to winnow the pack to a clear leader and to formulate a Democratic message that can reach all regions. But this much is clear: the Democrats can't lose with a message of making the economy work for the average American and can't win without it.

Mechanicsville

Continued from page 7

the democratic candidates have been dragging across the state, bloodying themselves and each other, for the last two years.

"All right now, everybody. Div-i-i-de into preference groups," hollers Ferguson at precisely 7:30, sounding like a caller at a square dance.

And there, like at a dance, people immediately start weaving across the floor, seeking out their candidate's sign, circling around each other, bumping into each other, some talking, a few laughing, threading their way across the crowded room to the right area. Once there, they wait impatiently to see who joins them, counting each new arrival on their fingers while at the same time craning their necks trying to keep track of the support of their rivals.

By 7:35 the swirling stops. Small knots of people dot the room. A young woman sits by herself under Albert Gore's sign wearing a wry smile that seems to say "Now doesn't this just figure."

To the woman's left, beneath the Babbitt sign, sits the unmovable Mary Brown, her head held high.

Musical chairs: It quickly becomes apparent that there are too many Dukakis followers for their area; they spill over into the spot designated for Gary Hart, making it difficult to see who supports whom. Ferguson asks the Dukakis group to move to the res-

taurant's front room. They are ebullient as they leave. They laugh and joke among themselves and the men slap each other on the back: we need a room of our own!

Everyone else in the room watches them leave in silence.

With the Dukakis contingent gone, the depth of Gary Hart's disaster in Iowa becomes clear. Beneath the hand-lettered sign bearing the name "Hart" sit three empty chairs.

A young Paul Simon supporter looks over his shoulder at the empty Hart section for a moment and then turns back smiling.

The head count stands at Dukakis 17, Simon 15, Gephardt 15, Jackson 7, Gore 1, Babbitt 1, Hart 0, and 3 undecided.

While Dave Ferguson is working on his calculator to figure how many supporters a candidate needs to claim one delegate to the county convention, a man comes in from the front room and announces that there is a phone call for a tall, rangy farmer who is aligned with Gephardt. As the tall farmer strolls out, a woman in the Jackson group calls after him: "It's Jesse calling to tell you to move over."

This interruption somehow serves as an unofficial signal to begin horse trading.

A vivacious woman with salt-and-pepper hair turns to a large man seated under the "Undecided" sign.

"Come on over here, Dave," she says and pats a chair next to her in the Simon circle.

The man, who is sunk down low into his chair, says "I can't stand Simon," and looks sullenly away.

The woman is momentarily taken aback. She pats her hair, shrugs and says in an even voice: "Well, then, I guess you probaby shouldn't support him."

Ferguson announces that each candidate needs eight supporters to claim one of the precinct's seven county convention delegates, prompting a groan from the Jackson group, which is one short of qualifying for a delegate. Unless people switch their allegiances, Jackson—as well as Gore, Babbitt and Hart—are out of the running in the Pioneer Precinct.

"I'll shovel your walk for a year if you come on over here," offers a Simon supporter to a Jackson backer seated nearby. The Jackson man laughs. His wife elbows him in the ribs as if to suggest the deal merits consideration.

Both the Simon and the Gephardt forces need only one more supporter apiece to claim another county convention delegate.

Taking a stand: Gore's lone supporter is

the first to be swept into another group: she walks over to the Dukakis fold, which has returned from the front room. The groups' smiles grow wider. Her change gives Dukakis a total of 18 supporters—good for two delegates.

One of the "Undecideds" joins the Simon group, which now also qualifies for two delegates. Another member of the "Undecided" clan—the man who said he couldn't stand Simon—heads for the Gephardt circle, giving them two delegates.

A Jackson backer complains about the difficulty in deciding whether to stand with the individual you believe in or to go with someone you think can win. Another Jackson supporter shakes her head. "Well, if everyone who feels that way voted for him, he'd win," she says bitterly.

While this conversation is going on, the last "Undecided" caucus-goer joins the Jackson group without a word, giving them one delegate to the county convention. When they notice his presence the group whoops its approval.

Through it all, Mary Brown, the Babbitt delegate, sits alone in her corner of the room. By 7:50 her allegiance is a moot point. Even if someone could manage the Herculean task of convincing Brown to switch, the change would not mean an increase in delegates for any candidate.

The final tally is two delegates each for Dukakis, Simon and Gephardt, and one for Jackson. Each group selects its delegates and alternates to the county convention, the hat is passed for the Democratic Party, and the Pioneer precinct caucus calls it a night at 8:19.

People begin filling slowly out of the room, debating the University of Iowa's Hawkeyes' chances in the upcoming game against Ohio State. Doc, the owner of the restaurant, pulls down the yellow candidate signs and tosses them onto a table.

Two men walk up to Doc and stand there as they pull on their gloves.

"Gonna save those for next time?" the shorter of the two asks.

Doc looks down at the table.

"Think I should?"

"Dunno," says the short man.

"You could do that," offers the taller one.

The three of them stand in silence for a while, looking down at the scraps of yellow paper as the rest of the group heads for home.

Osha Davidson contributes frequently to *In These Times*.

Rethinking MARXISM

Including Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale: 30 Years Later*/Cornel West, *Rethinking Marxism: A Third World Perspective*/Rosalyn Baxandall, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: *A Sexual-Political Life*/Stephen Resnick & Richard Wolff, *What Is Communism?*/Paul Sweezy & Harry Magdoff, *Marxism in America: An Interview*/Harriet Fraad, *Marxism and Psychoanalysis...and many other articles, plus poetry and graphics.*

ADVISORY BOARD • Michèle Barrett • Rosalyn Baxandall • Johnnetta Cole • Carmen Diana Deere • Terry Eagleton • Stephen Jay Gould • Fredric Jameson • Ernesto Laclau • Dominique Lecourt • Rayna Rapp • Stephen Resnick • Sheila Rowbotham • Meredith Tax • Cornel West • Richard Wolff • Harold Wolpe

Subscription rates: Individuals \$24/1 year, \$45/2 years; Students \$18/1 year; Institutions \$40/1 year, \$75/2 years (please add \$4 for all foreign subscriptions). Make check or money order payable to **Rethinking MARXISM**, P.O. Box 715, Amherst, MA 01004-0715.

Jack Amariglio, Managing Editor

a journal of political economy and social analysis

HELP WANTED

ALTERNATIVE JOBS INTERNSHIP opportunities! The environment, women's rights, disarmament, media, health, community organizing and more. Current nation-wide listings—\$3. Community Jobs, 1516 P St., NW, Box 1029, Washington, DC 20005.

BUSINESS MANAGER—In *These Times* seeks person with accounting and computer skills to maintain fully integrated computer accounting system, manage cash flow, do budget analysis, etc. High pressure job for dedicated individual. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: In *These Times*, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 472-5700.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WANTED by the National Save the Family Farm Coalition which is composed of 46 farm, rural and religious organizations in 32 states working on national farm policy. **DUTIES:** assure effective planning, implementation and coordination of all Coalition functions, including administration, program, fundraising and building relationships with other groups. **REQUIREMENTS:** experience in: grassroots organizing, especially rural organizing; program planning; policy advocacy; personnel supervision, fundraising. \$25,000–\$35,000, health insurance. Located in Washington, DC; other locations possible. Send resume and 3 references to: Ellen Ryan, FFORC, 2395 University Ave., Suite 202, St. Paul, MN 55114 Phone (612) 645-1231.

HIRING! Government jobs—your area. \$15,000–\$68,000. Call (602) 838-8885. Ext. 7724.

TRAVEL

CRUISE ENGLISH CANALS. Historian-

SCHOLARLY BOOKLET PROVES JESUS NEVER EXISTED!

Conclusive proof Romans (Flavius Josephus) created fictional Jesus, Gospels. **AMAZING but Absolutely Incontrovertible!** Send \$4 to Reuchlin Foundation, Box 5652-J, Kent WA 98064. SASE for details.

CLASSIFIEDS

skipper, four guests, good library, no schedule. \$475 weekly. Box 2083-T, Springfield, MA 01101. Telephone: (413) 562-9296.

PUBLICATIONS

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS — "The gay movement's newspaper of record." Each week GCN brings you current informative news and analysis of lesbian and gay liberation. Feminist, non-profit. AND there's a monthly Book Review Supplement. Now in our 12th year. \$29.00 for the year (50 issues). \$17.00 for 25 weeks. Send check to GCN Subscriptions, Suite 509, 167 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111.

PEACE IS BREAKING OUT IN NICARAGUA! IN *THESE TIMES* features in-depth reports on how the Arias Peace Plan is working in Nicaragua. From the Miskito Indians to the contra foot soldiers, IN *THESE TIMES* reports on how the Nicaraguan people are ending the war. Reprints of the October 21-27 issue are available for \$3.00 each, or 50¢ per copy for 25 copies or more. For more information call Maggie Garb at ITT (312) 472-5700, or send your order to: Special Issue, In *These Times*, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657.

STUDY SPANISH IN NICARAGUA

4 hours of classes daily. Meetings with political leaders. Family living and community work. Apply now for August, September and October sessions. Call (212) 777-1197 or write to Casa Nicaraguense, 853 Broadway, Room #105, New York, NY 10003.

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. In Michigan, Alaska and Hawaii call collect 313-761-4700. Or mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

PRESIDENTIAL BIOGRAPHIES: Send 22 cent stamp for monthly listing of available titles. AMERICAN POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY, 39-B Boggs Hill Road, Newtown, CT 06470.

VIDEO

THE WAR IN EL CEDRO as reviewed in ITT, Jan. 26 now available in VHS or Beta video. \$30 rental, \$45 purchase from Northstar Productions, 3003 "O" St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20007. (202) 338-7337.

EDUCATION

INDEPENDENT STUDY MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAM. Lesley College Graduate School, Advanced Graduate Study & Research Division. Design your own project-oriented graduate studies. No residency requirement. Call Margot Chamberlain, 1-(800)-541-8486 or (617) 868-9600, ext. 426 or 438. 29 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138-2790.

ATTENTION

MOVING? Let *In These Times* be the first to know. Send us a current label from your newspaper along with your new address. Please allow 4-6 weeks to process the change. Send to: In *These Times*, Circulation Dept., 1912

Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

VOLUNTEERS

ITT NEEDS VOLUNTEERS in the Business Dept. Gain political practical experience in a stimulating environment. Flexible hours available between 9-5, Mon.-Fri. Benefits include staff subscription rates, ping-pong. Call Hania at (312) 472-5700.

TYPESETTING

CONCERT TYPOGRAPHERS shares your interest in social change...Our profits help support *In These Times*. Concert Typographers provides excellent, fast typesetting with individual service and spirit. Put your typesetting dollars to work for social change. Call (312) 472-5700. Ask for Sheryl Hybert.

Or write for our FREE brochure: 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657. Member CTU, No. 16.

PERSONALS

CONCERNED SINGLES NEWSLETTER links left singles, nationwide. Free sample. P.O. Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

SCANDINAVIA, USA, THE WORLD: Educated members seek enlightened correspondence. SCANNA, Box 4-IT, Pittsford, NY 14534.

ASSOCIATIONS

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM. For free literature contact the Socialist Party, 516 W. 25th, New York, NY 10001.

GLOBALISM: seed of trade and technology. The Global Party, Box 7623, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.

CALENDAR

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

BROOKLINE MA

February 21

Democratic Socialists of America Forum: "From Civil Rights to Economic Justice, The Radical Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King." With Byron Rushing, MA State Representative; Prescott Williams, Harvard Divinity School professor; Shakoar Aljuwani, DSA Anti-racism Coordinator. Sunday, February 21, 7:30 p.m. Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St., Brookline. For information: Eric Bove (617) 426-9026.

CHICAGO

Feb. 26-27

Illinois SANE FREEZE State Conference at Governor's State University. U.S. Representative Lane Evans, North American Farm Alliance President Merle Hanson, workshops, strategy, entertainment by "Ripe for the Pickin'." Auction of theatre tickets, lake cruise, autographed collectibles and more. Call (312) 372-7867 for registration and auction details.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 2-6

Physicians for Social Responsibility's National Meeting, "The Great Debate: Choices About Nuclear Weapons in 1988," will occur in Washington, D.C., March 2-6. Events include Lobby Day, congressional reception, plenary sessions, workshops, and Award Banquet. Call (202) 939-5750 or write PSR, 1601 Connecticut Ave., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20009 for further information.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 11

Focus on Zaire: A Conference on Zaire's role in U.S. South African Israeli reactionary policies in Southern Central Africa; human rights abuses under Mobutu; U.S. legislation pending, denying Mobutu further aid, and call for international support. Speakers: Collette Braekman, Belgian reporter; William Minter, author on Africa; Serge Mukendi, Workers and Peasants Party, Congo; Prof. Nzongola Ntalaja, Center for Research on Zaire; Ann Seidman, Africa scholar; John Stockwell, Assoc. for Responsible Dissent. At 11 Dupont Circle, 8th floor conference center, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., \$15. Student \$5. Call for information (212) 864-3000 (NY), (202) 543-8324 (DC).

LIFE IN HELL

LIFE IN HELL

©1988 BY MATT GROENING

CHILDHOOD FAVORITES REVISITED

THE LITTLE ENGINE WHO COULD STOP DRINKING ANYTIME HE WANTED TO, ONLY HE DIDN'T WANT TO

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD AND THE BIG BAD WOODSMAN SHE MARRIED

ALICE OUT OF WONDERLAND AND IN AND OUT OF INSTITUTIONS

THE DAUGHTER WHO TURNED INTO HER MOTHER

THE UGLY DUCKLING WHO GREW UP TO BE A BEAUTIFUL SWAN AND THEN MADE INCESSANT ANTI-UGLY DUCKLING REMARKS

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN SHORT NEEDY BOYFRIENDS

THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF BUT WHO STOPPED AFTER ELECTROSHOCK TREATMENTS

THE LITTLE ENGINE WHO COULD, EXCEPT HE ATE FATTY FOODS AND DIED OF HEART DISEASE

THE SON WHO TURNED INTO HIS FATHER

SLEEPING BEAUTY AND HER LIFELONG DROWSINESS AND DEPRESSION

THE PARENTS WHO DID TO THEIR CHILDREN WHAT THEIR PARENTS HAD DONE TO THEM

GOOD GRIEF, IT'S LIFE IN HELL

IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Grab Attention

...and work like your own sales force. Your message will reach 96,000 responsive readers each week (72% made a mail order purchase last year). ITT classies deliver a big response for a little cost.

Word Rates:

80¢ per word 1 or 2 issues
70¢ per word 3-5 issues
65¢ per word 6-9 issues
60¢ per word 10-19 issues
50¢ per word 20 or more issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$28 per inch 1 or 2 issues
\$26 per inch 3-5 issues
\$24 per inch 6-9 issues
\$22 per inch 10-19 issues
\$20 per inch 20 or more issues

All classified ads must be prepaid. Ad deadline is Friday,

12 days before the date of publication. All issues dated on Wednesday.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ week(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Send to:

IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657.



85 minutes that shook the world

The Wannsee Conference
Directed by Heinz Schirk

By Pat Aufderheide

HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT THE UNSPEAKABLE? That's the question at the center of an unusual documentary-based drama, *The Wannsee Conference*, making the rounds of art centers and independent cinemas.

The question comes in two parts. How did a group of men sit around and talk about the Final Solution? And how do we talk about them and about the calculated mass murder of the Jews by the German Nazi government? Like Claude Lanzmann's 9-hour documentary *Shoah*, *The Wannsee Conference* is more concerned with the "how" than the "why" of making the Holocaust happen. But as with *Shoah*, how leads practically and inexorably to why.

If *Shoah* was an epic canvas of a film, *The Wannsee Conference* is an 85-minute vignette portrait. Those 85 minutes are exactly how long it took Nazi officials to come to bureaucratic consensus on the Final Solution at a villa on Wannsee Street in Berlin. (The house is now used as a camp for working-class children, with only a grim plaque on the door marking the historic meeting.)

Produced by German-Israeli director Manfred Korytowski with help from West German and Austrian television, the film appears to be a straightforward recap of the meeting, drawn from summary notes. The meeting notes were recovered from rubble by Allied forces and became key evidence in the Nuremberg trials.

They also figured in Adolf Eichmann's 1961 trial in Israel.

The various officials assemble, drink, pontificate and quarrel, following the script laid down on January 20, 1942 by a stenographic secretary. Head of Security Police and Secret Service Reinhard Heydrich (Dietrich Mattausch), looked upon as Hitler's right-hand man and successor, sets the agenda, treating the meeting as one to iron out difficulties in executing the mandate.

The Wannsee Conference: the Final Solution came down to office politics and a triumph of the bureaucratic will.

Glitches appear. Gestapo head Eichmann (Gerd Bockmann), who's been handling Final Solution transport and experimenting with mass-death methods (he's the "shipping expert"), raises practical problems. Exhaust fumes in gas vans haven't killed everyone at once; he vomited at the sight, something for which Heydrich magnanimously excuses him. Others protest about labor shortages and transport priorities. Wilhelm Stuckart (Peter Fitz), minister of the interior, complains that his complicated classification rules governing Jews with Aryan blood are being shredded.

The Polish Gestapo commander (Gerd Rigauer) leers. Heydrich keeps flirting with the stenographer. Rounds of drinks blur sensibilities, and a pet dog won't stop barking in the anteroom. No one questions the meeting's underlying assumption: 11 million Jews throughout Europe need to be eradicated.

The critical import of the casual, thuggish conference only registers when Heydrich abruptly adjourns the meeting and makes his phone call to Hitler. When Heydrich assures Hitler that none of the bureaucrats challenged his authority on the Final Solution, we finally understand the real agenda. It wasn't about clearing up implementation problems. It was about ensuring that Heydrich's authority was unchallenged—the ministries of the interior and justice, the foreign office, the various branches of the military were all now complicit and subordinate.

It's all so coolly executed and understated, with its opening credits pegging what we will see to the written record of events, that it's easy to forget we're watching fiction. But *The Wannsee Conference* is not a simple re-enactment. After all, the notes remaining, while meticulously reflecting the events, were not verbatim. Paul Mommertz' script was developed on six years of obsessive research by Korytowski and with advice from Israeli historian Shlomo Aronson. Dialogue was reconstructed, painstakingly matching period language and tone. The actors had to recreate the personalities of those officials at that moment of their power and powerlessness.

And finally, Korytowski and director Heinz Schirk use a style that points up the barbarity

of these men's banality. The leaden atmosphere, the sloppy drinking, the barking dog in the background, the disgruntled bumping up of official pride on the rock of official dictum keep bringing you back to specifics of moment and character.

Decisions about the fate of millions are part of inter-office rivalries, career-building, personal vanity. Everyone is attracted to the thrill of power, as we see most flagrantly in the titillated fascination of the women running the switchboard and the cool flirtatiousness of the stenographer. But it's also apparent in the eager flunkysm of Eichmann and in Heydrich's coolly prideful phone call to the Führer.

Whether or not the documentary-based drama recreates history with exactitude, it creates a horrifying, plausible vision, all the more provocative for its lack of commentary. *The Wannsee Conference* provoked plenty of controversy within Germany. It had to win awards worldwide before German TV, which had helped to fund it, finally decided to air it.

You can imagine a movie like this about other men, and other moments in history—one, say, featuring Ollie North and Bud McFarlane and the boys (the part for Bush would be highly speculative). Done right, like *The Wannsee Conference*, it would keep the focus on the ambitions and desires of those in pursuit of power, while framing the picture with enough distance for the viewer to see what the meeting participants don't want to look at. And it would probably have a devil of a time making it onto the air in its own country, too.

©1988 Pat Aufderheide